Downhill to Dutschke **Raymond Williams**

THE
NATION

FEBRUARY 15, 1971 *35 cents*

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92nd Congress:
Eulogies and Evasions
ROBERT SHERRILL

Coal Field Militants

VOTING FOR THEIR LIVES ***Paul J. Nyden***

BLOOD ON THE COAL ***Duane Lockard***

Epic for a Bad Century

RAMON GUTHRIE'S 'MAXIMUM SECURITY WARD'

Alexander Laing

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EDITORIALS

Political Theatricals

In this world of synthetic images, our Maximum Leaders in Washington have devised new means of continuing to do what they have a mind to do, despite the opposition of Congress, the courts, and a large segment of the people. One technique, abetted by the usual doses of advertising and public relations, is political theatricals: that is, carefully rehearsed performances in the form of public rituals. These were not invented by the present Administration—Robert S. McNamara was an artist in this line. Mr. Nixon and his aides, however, deserve credit for developing the technique to a state approaching perfection.

Two examples come to mind. One is the "Let's See What the Boys in Vietnam Are Doing" show, amusingly described by George McArthur in the *Los Angeles Times*. The lead is played by the Secretary of Defense. Mr. Secretary, costumed for his role as a warrior, goes to Vietnam, makes the ritual calls. (For some of these, as the obligatory calls on the U.S. ambassador and the South Vietnamese head of state or whoever looks as if he might be the next head of state, the Secretary is more conventionally garbed in bureaucratic mufti.) Having made the rounds, he emits optimistic forecasts, first in Saigon, then in Washington. These visits usually portend a new escalation, which, however, will be billed as a further de-escalation of the relentless struggle to preserve the freedom of the people of Vietnam. Like all artists, the incumbent Secretary, or the incumbent messenger of the incumbent President, may fall on his face from time to time. Thus McNamara predicted American victory so often that even newsmen began to doubt his reliability, and he went into honorable retirement at the World Bank.

Secretary Laird is held by connoisseurs to be a dull performer. Given the same top-secret briefings as his predecessors, he fails to excite the audience. It may be the personality of the Secretary, or the Washington script writers' failure to give him good material. However, he excels in one respect—after he returns to Washington one may expect that something melodramatically unhappy will befall the troops who remain in Vietnam. In this respect, Laird has it over such stars as Clark Clifford, George Romney ("I Was Brainwashed") and even Vice President Johnson, who declared that President Ngo Dinh Diem was the Winston Churchill of Asia, before the Americans allowed him to be murdered.

Another theatrical, one that cannot be repeated too often, is the visit of the Secretary of State to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. As Herblock, a nasty critic, has pointed out, the Secretary of State has become this country's ambassador to the committee, which plays the role of a hostile power. The Secretary is amiable, optimistic, tranquilizing. He always leaves himself an escape hatch: he does not quite answer the committee's questions. He emerges with the same buoyancy as when he entered, while the Senators come forth not quite soothed; some, in fact, mean and captious.

Since Mr. Laird has not been a great success so far, his performance might be improved if some newsmen would courageously stick their necks out and predict wl he will say on arrival in South Vietnam, what he will s on leaving, and, finally, what he will say when back Washington. This would show that Mr. Laird, while p sibly ill-cast, can at least memorize the script and relied upon to read his lines faithfully.

Just Looking On

The news that "military equipment delivery teams" now operating in Cambodia is further confirmation the President's ability to wage war exactly as he pleas regardless of the restrictions Congress might try to i pose. The Cooper-Church amendment to a $1 billi military aid bill specifically prohibits the introduction military advisers into Cambodia, yet teams of U servicemen are being sent into Cambodia to oversee t use of American military equipment by Cambodian troo in the field. The teams are made up of U.S. officers a directed by Jonathon Ladd, former commander of t Special Forces in Vietnam. The Administration origina contended that these officers would have no authority advise the Cambodians, but a Pentagon spokesman so allowed as how they might occasionally show them "whe the on-off switch is." Yet somehow they are not milita advisers—apparently because they will be unarmed a wearing civilian clothes. Even if you can believe that th are unarmed, the situation is roughly equivalent t clair ing that a plainclothes man is not a policeman.

And if this semantic subversion of Cooper-Church not sufficient insult, it seems that the dressing up soldiers in civilian clothes also violates the laws of w as set forth in the Geneva Conventions—a treaty signe by the United States, ratified by Congress, and carryi all the legal force of SEATO, NATO, or any of o other "overseas commitments." One of the provisions the Geneva Conventions stipulates that combatants sha wear "a fixed distinctive emblem recognizable at a di tance." The Administration would doubtless argue th members of the "military equipment delivery teams" a not "combatants," which leaves one with the question "When is a soldier not a combatant?"

Telford Taylor, chief counsel for the prosecution the Nuremberg trials and author of the devastating *Vie nam and Nuremberg: An American Tragedy*, defines "combatant" as a soldier who has a "reasonable expecta tion of coming in contact with the enemy." With Phnor Penh itself now being hit by commando raids, any Ame ican soldier in Cambodia would have a reasonable ex

ANNOUNCEMENT

The Nation regrets to announce the resignation of Phil Kerby as associate editor. Mr. Kerby was editor of *Frontier* from its founding until it merged with *The Nation* in February 1967, at which time his name was added to our masthead as associate editor. He is leaving us to join the editorial staff of the *Los Angeles Times*. As an old friend, valued contributor and respected colleague we wish him well in his new association. —*The Editors*

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ectation of meeting the enemy. Certainly those soldiers ho were filmed by CBS News at Phnom Penh airport ad such an expectation, else why were they wearing de arms? Richard Falk, Professor of International Law t Princeton University, defines a "combatant" as any oldier "engaged in operations concerned with the main- nance of a belligerent capability." Under that definition here is little doubt that the equipment delivery teams ould be "combatants," whether armed or not.

But none of this is likely to give the Administration ause as it forges ahead with its policy of redefining rms to suit the tactical needs of the moment. It hap- ened with such terms as "protective reaction" and interdiction," and before long we may be presented with definition of "combatant" which rules out anything be- w a battalion-sized search-and-destroy mission.

The Vulnerable Media

Television is feeling the pinch of the general recession s well as the loss of cigarette advertising, which con- ituted 10 per cent of its income. As might be expected, ie three networks are cutting back in those areas in hich public need is greatest and where there is the reatest opportunity for expansion and improvement. Documentaries are being curtailed (see TV column p. 18). Fred W. Friendly, former head of CBS News, is uoted in a recent interview as saying: "There simply ren't very many good documentaries on the air."

News programs are also being cut and trimmed. ABC News will lay off about thirty-five of its 554 employees; NBC has eliminated stand-by television crews used to over emergencies. Camera crews have been cut. FCC egulations have also been cited as justification for such noves as the rumored shifting of the CBS News Hour om prime time into the late Sunday viewing ghetto.

It was of course predictable that news on the air would ooner or later face some such stringency. "We're all ware of the fact," Reuven Frank of NBC is quoted as aying, "that commercial television has no income that oes not come from advertising and that that income is own." In fact, any news media entirely dependent on dvertising are vulnerable. But now that the public has ecome increasingly dependent on television for its news, here is a real danger that it will be less adequately erved than it has been, and frankly there has always een room for improvement. The public must understand —and there is evidence that the word is slowly getting hrough—that it has not paid the full cost of news and pinion since the 1880s, when advertisers began to sub- idize the media. For nearly a century the public has een the beneficiary of a service the cost of which was nderwritten by advertisers.

For example, no mass circulation magazine could today urvive on subscription income. In the past the danger of his dependency has been latent, but today advertising is self under heavy attack from a dozen different quarters nd there is reason to believe that the period of splashy nd expensive selling is over.

At the same time, a section of the public is becoming ncreasingly aware that our free press is heavily mortgaged —to advertisers. It is also becoming highly critical of

IN THIS ISSUE

February 15, 1971

EDITORIALS

194

ARTICLES

197 92nd Congress: Eulogies and Evasions — *Robert Sherrill*

200 Voluntary Convict: A Square's Night Behind Bars — *Paul E. Wilson*

206 Coal Field Militants: Voting for Their Lives — *Paul J. Nyden*

207 Blood on the Coal — *Duane Lockard*

210 London Letter: Downhill to Dutschke — *Raymond Williams*

BOOKS & THE ARTS

213 Guthrie: Maximum Security Ward — *Alexander Laing*

216 Bunting: Collected Poems — *Roger Guedalla*

218 Television — *Harry Rasky*

220 Poems

Poem on Love and Baseball — *Barbara Harr*
Winter Light — *Terry Stokes*
About Angels — *Paul Zweig*
For Dan Berrigan — *Robert McGovern*
The Surrogate — *Paul Blackburn*

222 Art — *Maurice Grosser*

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the performance of the media, printed and electronic. In a dozen communities newsmen have launched publications the purpose of which is to fix a spotlight on the shortcomings of the local media. "Inside media" publications and newsletters, here and there, have mounted savage attacks on aspects of commercial television. The phenomenon of the underground press is further evidence that many consumers of news and opinion—particularly the young—distrust the established media, because of their sponsorship as much as their performance. They also seek a different news emphasis.

Some of these new ventures are themselves dependent on advertising, but most are not. As the public grows more aware of the media—as they become legitimate objects of consumer curiosity and criticism—the dependence on advertising will be recognized as both a danger and a limitation. As circumstances are now proving, advertising is not always a reliable source of income, quite apart from the other disadvantages inherent in the subvention of the media by advertisers.

The Heirs of John L. Lewis

Most of the nation's 133,000 coal miners are members of the United Mine Workers. This union had a record of great militancy and determination to protect its members in the past. Under the leadership of John L. Lewis, the UMW made labor and social history. Under the leadership of W. A. (Tony) Boyle it has unmade that history.

The trouble is not the impoverishment of an industry, which sometimes leads to downgrading of working conditions and safety standards. Coal mining has been through hard times, but today, according to *Fortune*, the industry as a whole reports a 15 per cent profit margin, and almost 17 per cent return on invested capital.

Yet the mines are killing the miners. The 1970 toll was 254. After every catastrophe there is a public outcry—in the coal regions, that is; elsewhere it only makes headlines. But accidents happen all the time; the death of a single miner is noted only in the immediate area. Severe injuries are routine, as are "black lung" and other occupational illness, often lethal as the victim ages. The operators, the union officials, and even the miners themselves, who are the victims, tend to be fatalistic. A miner is quoted in the *National Observer* as saying, "If you make the safest possible mine, it's still bad." There is something to this, as to most folklore, but little effort is made to achieve the safest possible mine. The Bureau of Mines is none too diligent, yet virtually every mine disaster has occurred in a mine that has been found to be in violation of existing regulations. After the latest mine disaster, at Hyden, Ky., the Bureau of Mines "cracked down" by requesting prosecution by the Department of Justice for the deaths of thirty-eight miners. Thomas N. Bethell, a former anti-poverty worker turned journalist, has said in a 60-page report, "The Hurricane Creek Massacre," that these miners were victims of "institutional manslaughter." It is an apt term.

But safety is only one aspect of the working miner's problem (see p. 206). Affidavits filed in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia are held by the government to show that for millions in expenditures the union kept no records and has no supportir receipts. In a three-year period, 1967-69, the gover ment charges, more than $10 million of coal miner dues disappeared. The union has a local in Billing Mont., with very few members. R. J. Boyle, who h the good fortune to be the brother of Tony Boyl received $17,000 for "organizing expenses," althoug records required to be filed under the Landrum-Griffi Act list no salaried employees or organizers. Antoinet Boyle, Tony's daughter, received $40,000 a year as th UMW lawyer in Billings. All the Boyles come from Bil ings, although their union has done precious little t attract miners to its membership there. Medical expens of top officials have been paid by the union. These ar only samples of the financial mismanagement, to use th mildest possible term, which exists in the UMW, and ha existed since John L. Lewis' retirement.

Then there is the matter of the union's relation wit the National Bank of Washington, which it owns. In suit now being tried, dissident UMW members conten that some $75 million has been lost by the bank throug breach of trust and other malfeasance, such as keepin large sums from the union pension fund on deposit with out interest, and lending to coal companies that were ba risks, eleven of these loans totaling $17 million.

Against this background it is hard to make a cas against Duane Lockard's proposal (see p. 207) for th nationalization of the coal industry. We do not conten that a nationalized industry would present no problem On the contrary, we are aware that it would. But wha exists now is a corrupt collaborative relationship amon the companies, coal owners banded together in industr associations, and the UMW and its subsidiary bank Trapped in this institutional network, the miners have littl chance of extricating themselves.

Coal is a national resource which in the foreseeabl future will not grow less important. The jobs it offers, a great risk to those who, often in desperation, seek them are important from an economic and human standpoint Whatever evils nationalization might bring are less seriou than the existing state of affairs.

Rebel in Paradise

A man died. A Republican U.S. Senator said that th deceased had his "undying respect," that he could be "trusted and relied on," that "he never failed to keep a promise . . . never went back on his word." The Senato declared he was proud to have this man as a friend, and after further tributes quoted at length from a leading newspaper of his state, which said editorially that this was "one of our most influential men," whose "impact on our history and development has been so enormous as to preclude precise measurement." Another paper called for a monument in his memory, as one of the great builders of the region. Business and industry were in his debt, yet he stood pre-eminently for social justice and racial democracy. He himself said that if he wanted to be remembered for anything, it was as "a rebel in paradise, who struck a flame that has kept burning."

Who was this paragon, this heroic figure of our time? His eulogy was delivered by Sen. Hiram Fong and, with

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the tributes from the *Honolulu Advertiser* and *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*, covered two and a half pages in the *Congressional Record* (January 27). And the deceased? No other than Jack W. Hall, for nearly a quarter of a century director of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union in Hawaii. At the time of his death at the age of 55, he was vice president of the union. An Anglo-American, he forged a winning economic and political coalition out of the notoriously mixed racial and ethnic background of Hawaii's working class.

But there were also memories of another kind. Jack Hall was one of the leaders of the great 1934 West Coast dock strike, and a "dangerous subversive." He was convicted of violating the Smith Act; fortunately, the verdict was reversed in the Circuit Court of Appeals, or it would have been a bit awkward to write those eulogies. It was better not to mention too prominently that when Jack Hall came to Hawaii from Wisconsin (though in his later years he was claimed as a native son) he was harassed, hounded, tailed and beaten up.

Had Hall changed? No. What then had happened? Essentially, Hall and his union taught the Islanders and the Islands' Establishment that they knew more about how best to run the economy, how to govern the territory and later the state, how to achieve racial and ethnic unity, than did the militant management of a quarter of a century ago. As the *Honolulu Advertiser* had said editorially in 1969, "more than any other man, Hall helped bring industrial democracy to these Islands as they moved from feudalism and paternalism to the sophisticated and broadly affluent society of today."

A career, therefore, paralleling that of the frightful ogre of yesterday, Harry Bridges. In the 1930s and 1940s Bridges was the most execrated of San Franciscans, the object of one harassing legal action after another—he narrowly escaped deportation—yet behold, now he is among the most respected and best liked citizens of the community.

The moral? Communities, regions, states and powerful individuals should be a bit more circumspect about whom they kick around, especially where "radical" and "subversive" ideas are involved. Ideas that enrage the Establishment may be the very ones desperately needed, even for the prosperity of the Establishment.

92nd CONGRESS

EULOGIES AND EVASIONS

ROBERT SHERRILL

Washington

When Richard Russell died, the 92nd Congress got a swell chance early in the session to limber up its rhetorical pipes. If one recalls that the Senator, by chairing the Armed Services Committee from 1951 to 1968, was a principal creator of the cold-war disaster and of our hysterical anti-Communist militarism, one may not be inclined to agree with Sen. Quentin Burdick that Russell's departure was "a great loss to the nation," or with Sen. Vance Hartke, that a suitable epitaph for Russell is "the greatest man I have ever known in public life, beyond comparison," or with Sen. Milton Young, that "Dick Russell was a part of God's plan . . . his silver beams did pierce far into the gleam of America's night"; or with Sen. Frank Church, that "His passing is like the felling of a great tree in a small forest." And when one considers that for the past two years Russell chaired the Senate Appropriations Committee, which gave little assistance to the needy and much assistance to the wealthy special interests, one might be especially hard pressed to agree with Rep. William Colmer's assessment of Russell's career: "Rising like a huge mountain above the undulating plain of humanity," which a future historian will be able to see only by lifting "his eyes high toward heaven to catch its summit."

Such rhetoric on the death of a colleague, especially one who packed plenty of clout during his lifetime, is to be expected. Unfortunately, there is some evidence that in this instance both liberals and conservatives meant it, for the 92nd Congress has already shown its determination to go down the same old racist Southern path (much beloved by Mr. Russell) which just about every previous Congress has trod so faithfully. There were some signs of this in the Senate, and many more in the House.

The House played another act in the roadshow tragedy that for six years has been billed as "The Mississippi Challenge." The curtain went up in 1964 when the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party showed up at the Democratic National Convention and demanded that they be seated in place of the all-white delegation on the ground that the whites had been illegally chosen via a Jim Crow election. Nobody at the convention doubted it, but still the blacks were offered only two meaningless "roving delegate" positions; the MFDP refused.

Then, you will remember, that great thespian Hubert Humphrey, fearing that if the plantation hands became too boisterous they might queer his chances to play Vice President, tried to get the MFDP to accept the compromise.

Mrs. Fannie Lou Hamer, the legendary civil rights fighter from Ruleville, Miss., recalled the embarrassing episode: "Mr. Humphrey, he kept telling us to compromise for two votes. He seemed *very* upset, very upset. Our attorney at the time [Joseph Rauh, an intimate Humphrey supporter] told us if we didn't go for the two votes, if we didn't *slow down*, Mr. Humphrey wouldn't get the nomination. I declare it was Mr. Rauh, and that's what he said. Mr. Humphrey was sitting right there when Mr. Rauh said that and he had tears in his eyes—I mean

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Humphrey had tears in his eyes—when Joe Rauh said it. I declare that is the truth. I asked [Humphrey] if his position was more important than the lives of 400,000 black people in Mississippi."

Mr. Humphrey was too much of a gentleman to answer the question. But the Mississippi blacks were herded aside in 1964 and told to come back four years later and everything would be fixed up just fine.

And sure enough, in 1968, the Aaron Henry-Charles Evers delegation was seated at the Democratic National Convention and the old white Mississippi crowd was excluded. Loyalists were named to the national committee, and the loyalist wing of the Mississippi party—now calling itself not just the Democratic Party but the Democratic Party of the State of Mississippi, as if the new label would wipe out the old racist taint—went into operation with the full stamp of approval of the national Democratic headquarters. The great day had arrived at last: the Mississippi Democrats were actively operating within the national party.

Well, not quite. Theoretically, perhaps, but not practically. Came the elections of 1970 and the new, integrated DPSM tried to get on the ballot and couldn't. Twice it tried, and twice the Mississippi Secretary of State sent back the application with a note saying that there already was a Democratic Party on the ballot—the Democratic Party of Gov. John Bell Williams, Sens. Jim Eastland and John Stennis, and Reps. Thomas Gerstle Abernethy, Jamie L. Whitten, Charles H. Griffin, Gillespie V. (Sonny) Montgomery and William Meyers Colmer—and that was good enough for him.

Stennis and, of course, all the Congressmen were up for re-election that year and the DPSM invited them all to file for office under the DPSM's auspices, or at least to file jointly through the new loyalist party. They refused.

Instead, they ran for office under a party label that was not recognized by the national Democratic headquarters; they ran in a party whose leadership was the same as had been refused seating at the 1968 national convention, and which since then had continued racism unabated, as best illustrated when Governor Williams cleared the state highway patrol of any guilt in the massacre at Jackson State College.

If the proudly racist Mississippi Congressional delegation could run a wildcat race and still be seated as bona fide Democrats with full seniority, then the question would be: is there really a national Democratic Party?

This was the question behind the 1970 Mississippi Challenge. Heading it on the inside was Rep. John Conyers of Detroit, who at least momentarily seems to be the spokesman for his fellow eleven blacks in the House. He would raise the question at the Democratic caucus at the beginning of Congress, hoping—though not hoping with much hope—to strip the Mississippians of their seniority.

What would this have meant? Most important, it would have meant dumping Colmer as chairman of the Rules Committee, which has been the graveyard of progressive legislation since New Deal days.

Other enormous benefits would have accrued to the nation from the deposing of the Mississippians. Representative Whitten would no longer have throttled farm reforms from the chair of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture, and that other advocate of agribusiness interests, Rep. Thomas G. Abernethy, would have lost his chairmanship of a House Agriculture subcommittee. And if the House had taken the step, the Senate would have had a hard time explaining why it didn't follow suit and depose Senator Stennis from his chairmanship of the Senate Armed Services Committee.

The Democratic Study Group, the House liberals, issued a special report in which the legal proprieties were laid out. Since the Mississippians hadn't run as national Democrats or as Republicans but as their own homespun variety of a party called "Democratic," they were clearly third-party candidates, and the DSG reported that there was ample precedence for putting third-party politicians at the bottom of the seniority list. It had been done to eight third-party Congressmen since 1930: three from the Progressive Party, three from the Farmer-Labor Party, one from the Independent Party and one from the American Labor Party. As the names of those parties indicate, they were on the left. So the question in 1971 was: would Congress do to right wingers what it had done to left wingers in the past?

Among other benefits to be had from deposing them, said the DSG, was party discipline: "The precedent would strengthen the Democratic Party in Congress by denying leadership posts to those—such as Representatives Colmer, Whitten and Abernethy—who use the posts conferred on them by the Democrats to subvert the Democratic Party in their home states and in Congress."

As for Representative Conyers, he saw the issue much more simply and perhaps more accurately: "What we were really answering Congressionally was what we thought of blacks in the Democratic Party. And secondly, we were deciding whether we would allow any gang of political thugs to steal the Democratic Party label in a state." Naturally, Conyers first sought the support of the leadership. He went to the Speaker-to-be Carl Albert, who comes from what is quite appropriately known as the "Little Dixie" section of Oklahoma.

Conyers recalls: "I sat down with Carl, and Carl and I started out—this was on a Thursday, I shall never forget it—and Carl was as sympathetic as he could be. As a matter of fact, Carl and I have always had very good relations. Friendly. I could always go into the Majority Leader's office all the time. And so I was in there explaining this thing to him, the legal difficulties, and oh man, he sympathized with me totally. He understood the necessity that forced and compelled me to bring this thing, but no support would I get from him.

"He just *couldn't*. You know, how's a guy going to rip off five Mississippi Congressmen with a total of 114 years seniority? In other words, it didn't matter what the merits were—this was out. But he understood that I had to do it."

As Conyers sat there listening to Albert's pious fraternalism, he began to get mad. "Something happened to me," he says. "Just two weeks before, I had been on national hookup, *Issues and Answers*, and I had said there would be new winds of change with Carl Albert. Oh, yes, I had

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said things were going to be different. And all of a sudden I realized that nothing was going to change."

Conyers might have been more sympathetic if Albert had had to play it cool in order to win the speakership, but, "Here was this guy unanimously elected—nobody in sight to challenge him. He couldn't have been defeated if he had wanted to be, and he sat there telling he was going to countenance the precedent that sanctions the most vicious form of discrimination that is practiced politically in any of the fifty states of the union. He couldn't be defeated. He was undefeatable, but he wouldn't support me."

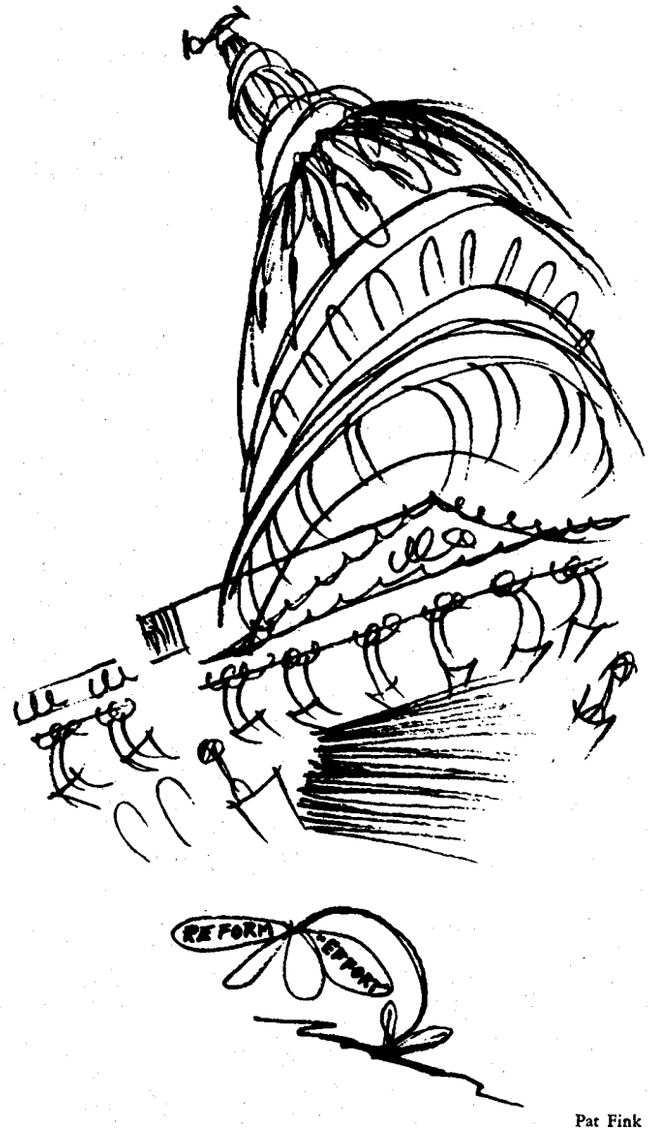
So Conyers on the spot told Albert he was withdrawing his support, and after thinking it over all night he decided to run against Albert. Why not? "Look at my programs," says Conyers, "my votes, my statements—they make far more sense than his do. If I was the Speaker, I could heal the Democratic Party and break up this Southern Democratic-Republican coalition by putting my finger on what was the biggest, single point of reform—knocking out the Mississippi delegation."

So Conyers started calling colleagues he thought might be interested in dumping Albert, who, at best, represents the last withered branch of the Sam Rayburn line. He says he found "the liberals were afraid of the Mississippi Challenge. They honestly were. And they were afraid of the logic of somebody running against Carl Albert. The standard response was, 'Jesus, John, you know I'd vote for you but I'm committed. Carl Albert pinned me down —what am I supposed to do? Go back on my word?'

"And I began to realize that what we were doing was just going through the motions. Here we are in the 92nd Congress talking about what we're going to do to Nixon in 1972, and these guys are still holding on to Colmer, who is out of the past. The only thing he can do is hurt us, and the question is, how much are we going to let him hurt us?

"And then you think of poor Aaron Henry and these guys who for twenty years have been fighting to get in the Democratic Party! What the hell for? You know, it's just a ridiculous circumstance here—we're now asked to ratify the Democratic Convention Posture and these guys say, no, no, our friendship, our loyalty, our camaraderie over these last twenty to thirty years are far more important than us unifying the party, for speaking out definitely to blacks and oppressed—hell, no. We're going to beat Nixon, and screw the blacks at the same time. And you know, I say, Carl Albert and Hale Boggs made a mistake. It's my bet that they're not going to be able to do that. I just don't have confidence that they can put this kind of game together. They're going to have to go into the black community and explain why Conyers' motion to challenge these guys couldn't win their support and approval."

Conyers didn't get much help lobbying for the Mississippi Challenge. The United Auto Workers said they were for it, but if they lobbied they did it mighty quietly. The AFL-CIO was also conspicuously quiet, and reportedly the NAACP was also. The only outfit actively pushing with him, says Conyers, was the momentarily revived Americans for Democratic Action.



Pat Fink

Inside the caucus, only two other Congressmen, one white, Bob Eckhardt of Texas, and one black, Charles Diggs of Michigan, joined Conyers in arguing for stripping seniority from the Mississippians.

Most of the heavy arguments on behalf of the whites-only Mississippi Democratic Party came from Wilbur Mills, Wayne Hays and Jim Wright. Wright of Fort Worth —one of LBJ's protégés—was especially mean and especially corny. Rather than exclude the Mississippi segregationists, he said (quoting that old poem), the party should draw a circle and pull people in. We can't afford these divisions and animosities. We're off to a new start, fellows. Let's put these black-white hatreds behind! The Democratic party is big enough for everybody!

Conyers thought he would perhaps get 100 votes for the Mississippi Challenge. He got fifty-five. In his race for the speakership, he received twenty votes. So if you want to know how many Democrats there are in the U.S. House of Representatives who want to throw off the Southern yoke and free the Rules Committee, there's your answer: fifty-five.

And what are the House reformers going to do about their defeat? Nothing. They'll just go on meeting in little

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groups, saying nice things to one another. There are enough blacks in the House—twelve—to get together and call themselves a black caucus. Some are cautious and some are militant, and the militant ones say they will try to convert the cautious ones. So there's that way to pass the time. And then there's an even smaller group of blacks and whites—Ryan, Conyers, Kastenmeier, Eckhardt, Rosenthal, Mikva, Fraser, Burton, and others—who get together and say liberal things to one another from time to time.

Abner Mikva, that remarkable fellow from the 2nd Ward of Chicago, perhaps because he has been in Washington only a couple of years, appraises the situation clearly:

> The biggest single disappointment to a new man is the intransigence of the system. You talk to people and they say, "You're absolutely right, something ought to be done about this." And yet, somehow we go right on ducking the hard issues. We slide off the necessary confrontations with problems. This place has a way of grinding you down.
>
> Some people around here still quote Sam Rayburn's "go along to get along" thesis as an ethical way of life, not just a pragmatic way of life. They quote that as the way a good Congressman should act. I've had it quoted to me innumerable times, including by people who are genuinely concerned about the issues I'm concerned about and who are genuinely concerned about my own welfare. They tell me, "You've got a great career here." And every time I finish that kind of a conversation I go back and ask myself, why do they think I have a great career here? I'm one of the worst go-along guys in politics. They seem to be elevating to an ethical level the politician's impulse to get re-elected. But I don't know anything in the Constitution or the Bible that says everyone who has been elected should do everything he can to be re-elected.
>
> I wouldn't be so perturbed if they would say, "Here's some practical advice." But they always try to raise it to an ethical level. They say the seniority system isn't so bad because it benefits some good guys. They say it is important to be elected if you are a good guy because Congress needs you.
>
> Well, the way I feel, it's sometimes important to be defeated, too. Al Lowenstein was defeated because he stood for the right things, and so his loss will nourish the Republic. There were dozens of other guys who were defeated, too, last year, but if you asked what defeated them, nobody could tell you. We know what defeated Al Lowenstein. His constituency didn't agree with his views on civil liberties and the war in Vietnam.

There aren't many in the 92nd Congress who would agree with Mikva. (In fact, it's pretty easy to see why the Army selected him as one to investigate.) The attitude of the 92nd is the old traditional one: play it safe in caucus, play it safe on the floor, play it safe in committee. Go along to get along, and when you kick off after thirty or forty years, your colleagues will pile into an Air Force plane and go to your home town and say nice things over your grave, as they did for Richard Russell, or they'll fill the *Congressional Record* with remarks about how you were a huge mountain above an undulating plain or a part of God's plan. The United States Congress has its own measure of things. □

VOLUNTARY CONVICT

A SQUARE'S NIGHT BEHIND BARS

PAUL E. WILSON
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I am middle-aged, square and a professor. I obey the law, fear God and vote Republican. Yet, on July 8, 1970, I entered the Nevada State Prison as a convict, my papers stating that I had been sentenced to a term of three years for possession of narcotics.

To avoid the inference that I am at present a fugitive from the justice of Nevada, I hasten to point out that my imprisonment was for educational rather than punitive reasons. It was part of the graduate course in Sentencing and Corrections at the National College for State Trial Judges. The college, located on the campus of the University of Nevada at Reno, provides professional training for judges of state courts of general jurisdiction. More than one-third of the judges of general jurisdiction, i.e., the highest level of trial judges of all state courts, have completed the college's one-month basic course. Last summer, the first graduate courses were offered and I was a member of the graduate faculty.

Thirty-four student judges and eleven faculty members, including four judges, law professors, criminologists and other professionals, participated in the week-long graduate seminar in Sentencing and Corrections. Also participating as expert consultants were eight convicts from the Nevada State Prison. Midway in the session, and as a means of broadening their perspectives, the non-convict participants were permitted to volunteer for incarceration in the Nevada State Prison for a twenty-four-hour period. Twenty-two student and faculty judges and I volunteered.

The Nevada State Prison is at Carson City, the state capital, some 30 miles south of Reno. The WPA guidebook, *Nevada,* contains this reference:

> Left from Carson City over an improved road to the Nevada State Penitentiary, which has the first lethal gas chamber constructed for execution of the death penalty. Here also is the old execution chair, its back to a stone cliff, with gun rests before it. For years the State allowed a condemned person to make a choice between shooting and hanging. Only one man ever chose to be shot.

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Shortly after lunch on the afternoon of July 8, I and ny twenty-two fellow volunteer convicts were loaded onto ı prison bus to be transported from Reno to the "joint." Ve had been admonished that no property might be taken nto the prison; hence, my wallet and its contents, my vatch, my ring, my keys and other normal pocket gear ıad been left behind. Shortly after 2 P.M. we arrived at he inhospitable front gate of the prison. The institution consists of two principal units. The maximum security ınit, referred to by the convicts as "Max," was constructed 100 years ago. A high-walled, turreted structure, medieval in appearance, it is in the tradition of American prison architecture. Here we were received and processed for admission, and here, subsequently, five of our colleagues were confined for disciplinary reasons. The other major unit is set on a mountainside, ten minutes by bus from "Max." A medium security prison, it consists of a cluster of new, one-story buildings arranged in a campuslike pattern. Indeed, had it not been for the high chain-link fence surrounding the area, and the towers at each corner manned by armed guards, the institution might easily have been taken for a junior college. All of us were initially lodged in this unit and seventeen of us remained there until our discharge.

Upon arrival at the outer gate of "Max," we were counted and checked and the bus was admitted and unloaded at the prison door. We were herded into a waiting area and the barred door closed behind us. We were in prison. The waiting room was a small area separated from a large and austere reception room by a chain-link partition. We were told to wait; those for whom bench space was available were seated; the rest stood around the wall. The half-dozen officers carried on inaudible conversations, occasionally looking in our direction. I suspected that they felt some impatience with the project. They played the game well, but I am not sure that they felt any enthusiasm for it. Eventually, we were called individually to a window which opened from the waiting room. Here I was divested of my remaining effects—a comb, a handkerchief and a name tag—and was issued a receipt. I was then informed that I would be doing a three-year term for possession of narcotics. I was asked my clothing sizes and whether I would need medication in the prison. Next, an officer directed me to the corner where I was told to strip and place my clothing in a paper bag. Then, in the presence of the twenty-two judges, a half-dozen "screws" and an equal number of convicts, my body was carefully and intimately checked to determine whether I might be carrying concealed weapons, narcotics, or other contraband. Having ascertained that I was "clean," the officer directed me to an adjacent shower stall. The water was pleasantly tepid and the supply of soap abundant; the towel was crisp and clean. But at this stage I began to sense the emotional impact of the intake process.

Of course, the experience was contrived and artificial. However realistic the game may have been externally, it could not have produced the stress, the sense of loneliness and fear and abandonment that must be felt by the thousands of men who are committed to prison each year. It is said that a white man cannot know the frustration and pain of blackness. Certainly a square can never know what it's like to be a convict. Our identities were known to the staff and the prisoners. Our personal safety had been assured by the warden and by spokesmen for inmate groups. We knew that we would leave the next day. Yet even as a dilettante, I could experience a vivid sense of the utter alienation and depersonalization that occurs at this stage in the process we call justice. I was utterly naked, alone in a chain-link pen. There was no place to hide. Outside the pen in the intake room were the screws, a few cons who were working as clerks and technicians, and some of my classmates who had preceded me. I had surrendered all evidence of identity—I.D. card, driver's license, credit cards and the other tokens of status on which I relied outside the prison gates. As I had been stripped of my clothing, so had I been deprived of all the criteria of individuality. I was no longer a person; I was number 00006. I kept glancing at my left wrist where my watch should have been. Of course, my watch had been left behind—and quite appropriately so. Time of day is not important in a world where there are no appointments to keep and no places to go.

Finally, I was called into the reception area. I was fumigated, sprayed with a pungent but not unpleasant disinfectant. I was measured, weighed, checked for physical deformities, and inspected for identifying marks. Scars, moles, birthmarks and freckles were noted and recorded, as was my height, weight, color of hair, etc.

Next I moved to the clothing room where articles of wearing apparel were issued. As a new inmate, I received a blanket-lined jacket (it was July in the desert), underclothing, a pair of stiff new blue jeans (the waist of which was too tight and the legs of which were too long), a crumpled blue shirt upon the back of which was stamped my number, and a pair of socks. I was grateful when I drew socks marked size thirteen—the size that I normally wear. However, I later learned that only size thirteen was available that day. My own shoes—those that I had worn into the institution—were returned to me and I was fully dressed. Belts are not issued to incoming prisoners; considering the fit of my jeans, a belt was not needed.

The next steps in the process included fingerprinting, mugging, and finally an interview with the inmate clerk. The interview was brief. The clerk ascertained and recorded the date and place of my birth, my place of residence, my educational accomplishment, my vocation and hobbies, the dates and nature of my military service, data concerning my family, and whether I wanted to work in prison. This interview completed the intake process. Again we waited while other members of the group were being processed, and when all had been admitted we were again loaded on the bus.

Orientation at the medium security unit consisted of an explanation by the captain of the rules and the daily schedule of the institution, the issuance of bedding and other property, and assignment to quarters. Items issued to us included two sheets, a blanket, a pillow and pillowcase, a towel, a padlock and key and an earphone to be plugged into the circuit by which radio broadcasts were piped into the quarters. Then, two convicts, who were introduced as members of the inmate committee, were called to escort us to our places.

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In the medium security unit at Nevada there are no bars or cells. The inmates, totaling not more than 400, are housed in low-spreading dormitory buildings, each having three wings. The living facilities are not unlike military barracks. Dormitory rooms accommodate twelve inmates, each room having an adjacent shower and toilet.

Relatively few guards, none of them armed, are in the dormitories and the yard. However, the high chain-link fence is topped with strands of barbed wire, and at each corner a guard tower is manned and equipped with an appropriate arsenal. The cons complain that it cost the state of Nevada far too much to build and equip the towers—about $80,000 each. The living and recreation area is also separated from the dining room, shops and administrative buildings by a high and sturdy fence.

Dinner was served from 5 to 5:30. By the time we were assigned rooms and beds, the chow line had begun to form. The line was long and moved slowly while the men conversed freely among themselves and with the supervising officers. Again, the resemblance to the military was striking. The food was served on metal trays from steaming vats. While a bit heavy, it was both palatable and abundant. The men used forks and spoons, but no knives. While eating, they were seated at four-man tables with fixed seats and each man was able to select his own table and dinner companions. I finished dinner and returned to the dormitory a little before 6. Recall, at which time each inmate is required to be on or beside his bed, is at 9. The next three hours were mine. By this time, I had been assimilated into the inmate population. My further contacts with the officers were minimal.

The prison grapevine is a marvelous thing. Before any of our group reached the area where we were to be housed, the inmates not only knew we were coming but knew who we were, where we were from, and other identifying data. Almost immediately upon returning from dinner I was approached by a young man who inquired if I wanted to buy a wallet. I explained to him that I was penniless, but he answered that that was no problem and took me to the craft shop, where a friend displayed a stock of handsome hand-tooled leather wallets. The craftsman suggested that I might like one for my son. I had no idea how he knew I had a son or whether he knew that my son's birthday was in ten days. I found his merchandise attractive and priced reasonably, so we arranged that he would tool my son's name on a wallet that I selected and that I would pick it up and pay for it a few days later at the inmate store at the prison gate. While this transaction was in progress, I was approached by a handsome youth who identified himself as Tony and inquired if I was Professor Wilson of the University of Kansas. He told me that he was the assistant inmate legal clerk and that he and his superior were much interested in talking with me and showing me their library. He said that they had read some of my articles on criminal procedure, that they were familiar with the *American Criminal Law Quarterly*, a publication that I had edited for several years, and that they were particularly interested in my experience in counseling with inmates at Leavenworth and Lansing.

He guided me to another building and to a small room equipped with two or three tables, half a dozen chairs, two typewriters and a few law books. There I was introduced to Jack, the inmate legal clerk. Two other young men in the room had apparently stopped by for legal advice. Jack is a slight, balding man of perhaps 33 or 34. Bright, articulate, he is a highly sophisticated "jailhouse lawyer." He provides legal services to inmates at the sufferance of the prison administration. Some would call Jack a con man—he is a five-time loser. He told me that the law fascinates him because it is the only thing he has never been able to cheat. Although his formal education is limited, he and his associates mentioned that he is currently enrolled in a correspondence course in law offered by the Blackstone Institute.

Jack said he hoped that, upon release from prison, he would be able to complete his legal education and practice law. He spoke of John Wesley Hardin, the legendary outlaw who studied law while an inmate of the Texas State Penitentiary and later practiced in the criminal courts of that state. Reluctantly, I reminded him that requirements for admission to the bar are somewhat more rigid now than in the last century, and that even though he might obtain a degree from an accredited law school, his rather impressive record of felony convictions made it unlikely that he could be admitted to the bar of any state. We discussed the possibilities in para-legal work, which might provide him with the interest and excitement that he finds in law.

Jack is a poignant illustration of the problems that arise in efforts to rehabilitate offenders. A paramount objective of the correctional system should be to assist former offenders to assume useful roles in society. Jack has demonstrated a striking capacity to perform legal services. However, because of the vital public interest in the administration of justice, every state requires that candidates for admission to the bar show evidence of good moral character. Can a man who has been convicted of five felonies ever supply persuasive evidence that he is worthy of the trust reposed in lawyers? In his present role, Jack provides a needed service. There is no lawyer on the prison staff, nor is any legal-aid service available to inmates. Obviously, every inmate of the penal institution has a serious legal problem. Most of them are without funds and have no means of procuring legal services from outside the prison. Possibly for the first time in his life, Jack is engaged in an activity that is useful to others and satisfying to himself. Perhaps as a jailhouse lawyer he has found his role in life; but it is a career that can be pursued only in prison.

Eventually, Jack will be released. Our aim is to rehabilitate him, yet we deny him the opportunity to do the thing for which he is most strongly motivated. Despite the efforts of the past decade, there is still a dearth of legal services available to the poor. Legal-aid agencies are inadequately staffed and financed and the services that they perform are necessarily limited. I wonder if a person of Jack's competence could be employed by a social service agency to perform routine legal services under the supervision of a professional whose credentials are somewhat less tarnished. That way, he might not have to resume his career as jailhouse lawyer.

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During the hour that I spent at the legal office, I lispensed a great deal of advice and counsel. One young nan was on parole from a Michigan sentence when he ell from grace in Nevada. His Michigan parole was revoked and now, as his Nevada term is about to expire, Michigan wants him for the years that he owes there. For obvious reasons, he is reluctant to return to Michigan. Must he? Another inmate wonders about the competence of his counsel who advised him to plead guilty to first-degree murder. Several wanted to inquire about the application of the Nevada "four-time loser" law. As they related it to me, more than forty years ago the Nevada legislature enacted a statute which provided that one sentenced to prison upon a fourth conviction of felony should not be eligible to parole. For many years the statute has been dormant and four-time losers have been paroled. However, as a result of a recent ruling by the attorney general of Nevada, the statute has been revived and a large number of men, otherwise eligible, are being denied parole because of prior convictions. My opinion was eagerly sought as to whether a change in policy based on an attorney general's opinion can be successfully attacked under the ex post facto limitation of the Constitution.

After more than an hour, Tony and Jack suggested that I ought to see the institution, and we moved out to the yard. It was not unpleasant. To the west, the barren Sierra Nevadas were capped with the brilliant colors of the sunset. A cool desert breeze was blowing. A baseball game was in progress. A few inmates were pitching horseshoes. Most were just talking—talking about the prison administration, their next appearance before the parole board, politics, women, automobiles, their plans for the future, hundreds of other matters.

The attitudes of the inmates in the yard toward the visiting group ranged from subdued hostility to the most patronizing kind of attention. Those who were most attentive had axes to grind. They wanted to discuss their legal problems with a visiting judge. As the evening lengthened, those who at the outset were indifferent began to lose their aloofness and by eight o'clock each visitor was surrounded by a large group of friendly men who wanted to talk. Many of the men were quite well informed about the world outside. I was asked concerning conditions on the campus of the University of Kansas; a Texan was asked whether he was the judge reported to have imposed a 1,500-year sentence; a Minnesota judge was asked how Hubert Humphrey would do in the fall election.

As in every group of men, particular personalities stood out. A middle-aged man who looked to be a Latin, and whom I shall call Joe, was being congratulated by his fellows. Upon inquiry I learned that he was spending what he expected to be his last evening in the yard. Joe, jailed three times, had worked in a Reno casino, where he developed a scheme by which to siphon off some of the profits of his game. After accumulating a substantial sum, he departed for Puerto Rico where he planned to play the games that he had learned in Nevada. Apparently he was less successful as a player than as an embezzler, for in a few weeks he was broke and back in Reno. His next stop was the Carson City prison, where he spent several years. Joe was much interested in the careers of great criminal lawyers. We discussed some of the biographies—Gene Fowler's *Great Mouthpiece,* Irving Stone's *Clarence Darrow for the Defense,* Adela Rogers St. John's book about her father, and others. Joe told me that his favorite lawyer is Jake Erlich of San Francisco and that he hopes some day to meet him. His cousin from New Jersey would be in Carson City to pick him up and fly with him back to the East Coast. He had high hopes. Some of his friends were less optimistic. One remarked, "It's too late. He's been in joints all his life. He'll never be able to turn square."

Paul E. Wilson

Don was one of the convicts who had met with the class in Reno, and I had talked with him frequently. He was a former varsity football player, about 28 years old. Prior to his conviction, he had been a doctoral candidate in psychology at a distinguished Southwestern university. He was doing five years for second-degree murder. He had killed his wife, they said. He seemed a thoughtful young man, something of a loner. Other convicts said that Don was not a con, but simply a square who had fallen. At the same time they expressed respect for him and he seemed eager to identify himself with the prison population.

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He said that because of his academic accomplishments, he had been offered a position as an inmate teacher in the prison school, but had refused because it would have required him to evaluate his fellow inmates according to standards prescribed by the institution and to report other cons for possible disciplinary action. He seemed anxious that his imprisonment not push him to an acceptance of the values of either the inmate population or the system represented by the staff. He complained of the dehumanization that he thinks inevitable in the correctional process. While agreeing that he had had a fair trial, he complained of the impersonal attitudes of the participants. The police, the prosecutor, the judge, and even his own lawyer appeared to him to be following a routine, doing a job, oblivious to the fact that they were dealing with a human being for whom the world had become hopelessly complex. He had felt that he was the only person in the courtroom who was aware that his life was at stake.

Don also complained of prison discipline, which to him seems to reduce all inmates to a common denominator. For example, he had once been punished because he was lying quietly on his back in the prison yard during a snowstorm. His posture, he said, was motivated simply by the desire to be alone and by a curiosity about the falling snowflakes. The officers had failed to understand; eccentricities have no place in prison. And while on the campus of the University of Nevada as a consultant to our class, he visited the university bookstore without permission, but in plain view of the officer in charge of the inmate group. For this, he said, he had been "written up" and would undoubtedly be gigged. Don was a complex and interesting person. Why did he kill his wife? I have no idea.

Pete is perhaps 30, tall, physically powerful and intelligent. His Nez Percé and Paiute blood is only slightly diluted by European strains. He is a former Marine and an ex-cop, having been employed as a criminal investigator by the Indian Service. After he killed an adversary in a barroom brawl, he was sent to Carson City for murder. Like Don, he has no previous criminal record. Pete is an acknowledged leader of a small group of Indian and Chicano prisoners, commonly called the tribe. The tribe apparently takes care of its own and of those non-Indians whom it likes. Pete does not like many white men. He says we have ravaged his land, degraded his people, and destroyed his heritage. I established rapport with him by mentioning some of the new books in the literature of the American Indian—Deloria's *Custer Died for Your Sins,* and Steiner's *The New Indians.* Pete spoke with satisfaction about the Indian occupation of Alcatraz and thought that the Indians had the government on the run. Maybe better days were ahead.

Despite efforts to compel conformity, the inmates present a remarkable range of individuality. This may not be surprising because, in essence, crime is intolerable nonconformity. Except for his prison garb, George, in appearance and demeanor, might have been taken for a successful business or professional man. He was about 40 years old, of medium height and build, with graying hair and handsome features. Most of his adult life had been spent in penal institutions. At 16 he was in the juvenile court; at 18 he was given probation after a conviction for car theft. A few years later, after another theft, he entered the Nevada State Prison. During his first prison term he sought to become proficient as a dealer, in order that he might earn a living in the casinos of Reno or Las Vegas. I do not know whether this study was part of the prison's vocational training program or an inmate project. In any case, George found upon release, that his training had been deficient. While he could deal blackjack, his skills were not sufficiently diversified for a position in a casino. Within a few months he returned to burglary and jail. One misstep led to another, until he is now doing a life term for murder. George is a wheeler-dealer type, a person of importance in the prison. He has power and is respected by the inmates. He appears really interested in the problems of delinquency and correction. A year ago he served as a consultant for a conference of judges; last summer he was one of the consultants at the session in Reno. Like many convicts, he is an enigma; in prison he is a useful citizen; in the community he is a menace.

As darkness fell, men drifted away from the yard. The meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous ended and the men returned to their quarters. Late in the evening, to add more realism to the experience, five of my colleagues, all of whom were judges, were called to the captain's office and charged with breaches of discipline. They were taken summarily to the maximum security unit where they were lodged for the night. As I was not in this group, my comments on their adventure are based on hearsay and report. All were manacled and chained. While they were informed of the nature of the offenses charged against them, none was permitted to respond. At the maximum security unit they were placed in disciplinary and quarantine cells. Several times they were stripped and intimately inspected by officers for weapons and other contraband in the presence of other inmates whose comments were somewhat disconcerting to men accustomed to being addressed as "Your Honor." The cells in which they were lodged were furnished only with mattresses. The toilet facilities consisted of a hole in the floor through which water was automatically flushed every seven minutes. The inmates in surrounding cells, aware of the identities of their distinguished visitors, responded appropriately. One judge reported that several hundred inmates beat the bars with tin plates and howled like banshees. Another judge believed that the sounds were happy sounds, and therefore, not alarming. Still another judge supposed that, since the men were given no work, they slept all day and raised Cain all night.

The seventeen of us who remained in medium security passed a somewhat more peaceful night. At nine o'clock recall was announced and each inmate returned to his bed to be counted. The beds were steel cots of the kind often found in military barracks. Next to his cot, each man had a steel locker where his effects were kept. Each of us had been given a lock and key and had been instructed to keep our things in the locker (of course, we had nothing). An inmate told me that the lock was quite unnecessary, as convicts seldom steal from one another. At recall, I met the other nine occupants of my room (two beds were empty). The range in age was from

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about 18 to 50. Four were black. At the outset, all seemed indifferent, even hostile to my presence. I lay on my bunk for perhaps fifteen minutes while no one spoke to me. I tried to turn on the reading lamp at the head of my bed, but the bulb had been removed. I plugged in my earphone, but it didn't work. I admit that at this point I was a bit tense. Finally, a man returning from the shower audibly muttered to his neighbor, "I wonder what in the hell these dudes want here." To which I responded, "I wonder why in the hell somebody doesn't ask them."

This exchange broke down the barrier and immediately several of the men began to exchange remarks with me. They knew, of course, who I was and that I was part of the world that had condemned them and upon which their anger focused. But once communication had begun, our awareness that they were cons and I a square seemed to disappear. We were all human beings, each seeking answers to problems that none of us fully understood. At various times during the next three hours, most of my roommates sat on the edge of my bed or leaned against my locker and talked. Slim was from Texas and was my age. His troubles with the law began shortly after World War II when he was in the used-car business. He is currently serving his sixth prison term. He told me that he had never hurt anyone, but he cannot resist an easy dollar when the opportunity comes. Slim works in the dairy, outside the walls. He apparently likes his job, but complained about the low standards of performance of the "free people"—the civilian employees. The bed on my right was occupied by a black youth, perhaps 22 or 23, reportedly doing a term of forty years for robbery. He had several prior convictions although, Slim told me, numerous larcenous episodes had netted him an aggregate of less than $400. And he always got caught.

The man on the other side was slender, boyish-looking and white. Among the several convicts in the room he was the only one who did not speak to me during the evening. Slim told me that the youth had been sentenced for car theft at the age of 18, but that it would have been better had they "stood him against the wall and shot him." From Slim's oblique comments I inferred that the boy had been the victim of a prison rape. Several of the judges with whom I went to the prison reported that homosexuality was rampant. Indeed, one judge stated that he lay on his back during the entire time that he was in bed because in that posture he was least vulnerable to sexual attack. I observed no evidence of homosexuality, and am inclined to believe that in Nevada, as elsewhere in penal institutions, the reports of homosexuality may be exaggerated.

As the evening wore on, the men talked about many things. Each wanted to inquire about some aspect of his case. Few denied their guilt; indeed, most were forthright in acknowledging their misdeeds. But while none expressed remorse or misgiving, all seemed to think of the law as an arbitrary and self-righteous enemy. Usually their bitterness focused upon some individual in the process. Sometimes it was the prosecutor or judge; more often it was defense counsel. Most convicts apparently believe that, no matter how grievous their crimes, the law provides some means of avoiding the consequences, and that a skillful defense lawyer can put any accused person on the bricks. Some professed not to know what had happened at their trials. I suspect that in many cases the convict's dissatisfaction with his defense springs not from the professional failure of his counsel but from the counsel's failure to communicate, to establish the lawyer-client rapport necessary for effective advocacy. Some complained about the harshness of Nevada sentences, the obscurity of standards for parole and the capriciousness of the parole board.

By midnight most of the occupants of the room were in bed. Men in prison do not sleep well. There was a constant murmur of groans, snores and men talking, tossing and turning. Each hour an officer made a bed check, flashing his light on each bed as he passed through the room. There were frequent trips to the latrine. Some men read until nearly morning.

My bed was quite comfortable. Before morning I needed a blanket to protect against the desert chill. As a rather chronic insomniac, I slept only a little. As the hours dragged on I recalled the words of Oscar Wilde, the poet laureate of convicts:

I know not whether laws be right
Or whether laws be wrong;
All that we know who lie in gaol
Is that the wall is strong:
And that each day is like a year
A year whose days are long.

After receiving our discharges next morning, we were again loaded onto the prison bus and delivered to the college at Reno to be interviewed by representatives of the press and other news media. All who had participated had been sobered by the experience. Some of the judges expressed outrage at the things they had observed. One sensitive Kansas judge, in an emotion-charged statement, said that the greatest service that Nevada could perform for mankind would be to get a bulldozer to break down the walls of the Nevada State Prison. The disturbing aspect of this statement is that Kansas judges, like judges elsewhere in the United States, sentence men every day to similar institutions to be imprisoned under comparable conditions. Most do not know or understand what they do with the lives of the men who come before them for sentencing. Few bother to find out.

The Nevada State Prison is probably a good prison as American prisons go. I saw no evidence of physical mistreatment. The men were adequately housed, clothed, and fed. None of them is overworked. While stern disciplinary measures are practiced, they differ little from those employed in other penitentiaries. If an indictment is to be made against the Nevada institution it would be valid against most other American prisons. Its vice lies not in its brutality but in its dehumanization: a man, created in the image of God, becomes a number; he is stripped of all symbols of status and individuality; he is subjected to the most rigid regimentation; he is deprived of the opportunity to work, to love, and to engage in most kinds of meaningful human activity. Despised by his community and often abandoned by his family and friends, he has only time—time for brooding and bitterness. Yet we piously hope that in three or five or ten years he will

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emerge from this setting, prepared to become a useful member of society. And when it becomes clear that he has failed to learn what we have failed to teach, we send him back to prison.

Why do we send men to prison? Some say for punishment. But punishment for the sake of punishment—to hurt a human being because other human beings think he deserves to be hurt—hardly befits a society that derives its values from the Sermon on the Mount. Others say that prison sentences deter further crimes. The threat of punishment may motivate most of us to obey the traffic laws and to file our income tax returns, but does it deter the potential murderer, the rapist and the professional thief? There is abundant evidence that it does not. It is also argued that we must remove and isolate those who may harm us. Certainly that is a proper objective, but if it is the main objective, why not lock the offender up for life, or kill him? Most would agree that the remedy is one we cannot afford. Finally, it is said that prison should rehabilitate and reform criminals and prepare them for useful roles in society. If we can change men's attitudes and behavior—if we can awaken in them a sense of social responsibility and self-discipline—if we can exorcise the criminal without destroying the man—that must be our paramount objective. But do we have the concern and imagination and patience, and are we willing to bear the cost of trying?

Jim Bennett was for twenty-seven years director of the United States Bureau of Prisons. He knows prisons and prisoners as do few living Americans. He concludes his remarkable book, *I Chose Prison,* with these lines: "I believe there is a treasure in the heart of every man if we can find it—*if we can help him find it.*"

Nevada is great treasure country. Every Western buff has been thrilled by stories of the Comstock lode and Tonopah and Goldfield. But in the Nevada State Prison, as in its counterparts elsewhere, the treasure in the hearts of men lies untapped and unsought. □

COAL FIELD MILITANTS

VOTING FOR THEIR LIVES

PAUL J. NYDEN

Mr. Nyden is making a study of militancy among coal miners on a grant from the Louis M. Rabinowitz Foundation.

Morgantown, W. Va.

The early morning light revealed "Antal—Give 'Em Hell" scrawled in chalk across the cement wall of the Mathies Mine's cleaning plant in Courtney, Pa. Election officials, along with miner and student poll watchers, gathered here and at eighty other polling places throughout District 5 of the United Mine Workers of America on the clear, crisp morning of December 8, 1970. The balloting followed a long and often bitter contest between Lou Antal and Michael Budzanoski for the presidency of this 14,000-man district surrounding Pittsburgh. Some of these ballots have been impounded by the Department of Labor, and as of this writing it is not known when the result of the election will be final.

The campaign grew out of the long history of militancy in the coal fields, and out of Jock Yablonski's campaign last year; but most of all it grew out of the crisis every coal miner faces each working day of his life. Each day he goes down into his mine knowing he may never come back up alive. Each day he breathes the coal dust which gives him black lung, and may some day strangle him to death. Each day he remembers that when he finally retires (if he lives that long) he can look forward to $150 a month pension—always assuming that his union's Welfare and Retirement Fund hasn't run out of money by then.

In the National Bituminous Wage Agreement of 1950, the UMWA agreed to allow the coal companies to automate the mines in exchange for an industry-wide guarantee of royalty payments to the Welfare and Retirement Fund for each ton of coal mined. With automation, hundreds of thousands of miners lost their jobs; many never found steady employment again. Yet the union leadership hasn't even won a higher standard of living for the remaining 120,000 coal miners, who today mine as much coal as did 450,000 miners twenty years ago. And this leadership has not won an increase in royalty payments since 40¢ a ton was negotiated in 1952.

Once the royalty system was established, union leaders became as concerned with maximum and uninterrupted production as the operators always had been. The UMWA has not called or authorized a single strike since 1950. Its leaders don't use their legal powers to close mines when hazardous working conditions exist. And when miners call safety strikes themselves, as they often do, their union tries to get them back on the job rather than supporting their demands. The UMWA has also overlooked the high dust levels in most mechanized mines. West Virginia miners made progress on this issue only when more than 95 per cent of the state's 55,000 miners held a wildcat strike in February and March of 1969. (See *The Nation*: "The Black Lung Rebellion" by Robert Sherrill, April 28, 1969.) As long as both operators and union leaders give production priority over health and safety, rank-and-file miners have no hope for remedy except in wildcat strikes and in such election challenges as this one in District 5.

Lou Antal, the outspoken 50-year-old leader of Miners for Democracy, ran for the District 5 presidency against Michael Budzanoski back in 1966, when no one else ran with him and when even the late Jock Yablonski urged him to withdraw his challenge to the incumbents and their do-nothing policies. One of the "original rebels" who opposed the "sweetheart" Peabody Contract in 1964,

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Antal has been a coal miner for thirty years and is now president of the large Harmarville local, just northeast of Pittsburgh.

W. A. (Tony) Boyle, John L. Lewis' hand-picked successor, must have been "the sickest guy going when he Auto Workers came up with that $500 pension," Lou Antal cracked; it "shows what a faker he and a lot of other labor leaders are." The coal miners—who endure higher accident rates, higher death rates, and higher illness rates than any other group of industrial workers—attained their meager $150-a-month pension only in June 1969, when Boyle raised it by $35 a month shortly after Yablonski declared his candidacy for the UMWA presidency. But pensions have been cut in the past and, since the fund lost $30 million last year, many pensioners fear that the $150 level won't hold long.

In the United Mine Workers, unlike most unions, pensioners may vote in all elections. These older men must have at least twenty years' work in the mines to collect a pension; many have more than forty or fifty years. Pensioners came in to their polls throughout election day; some walked with canes, some were completely hunched over, almost all had some difficulty in breathing. Of the sixty-nine local unions in District 5, forty are made up entirely of pensioners. The other locals also have pensioned members, but are based at working mines.

Because the incumbent District leadership used every means to set the pensioners at odds with the working

BLOOD ON THE COAL

DUANE LOCKARD

Mr. Lockard, chairman of the Department of Politics, Princeton University, lived in Monongah, W. Va., where in 1907, 361 miners were killed in one of the world's worst coal-mine disasters. His grandfather and father were miners, and his mother was recently granted a "black lung widow's pension." He worked in the mines as a young man. Mr. Lockard is the author of The Perverted Priorities of American Politics *which Macmillan will publish this month.*

The time has come to nationalize every coal mine in the United States. Apparently no other strategy will end the slaughter of miners, which has become a national disgrace if we but had the wit and humanity to recognize it. In no other major mining nation does such killing go on. In Britain serious accidents in mines occur at less than a quarter of our rates of maiming and killing. That Britain has nationalized its coal industry may not be the only reason for the country's preventive measures, but it helps. It is of more than passing interest that other countries with outstanding safety records are France, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland and Yugoslavia; all have nationalized mines.

The Hyden, Ky., explosion is a grim accounting marker for the much acclaimed Coal Mine Health and Safety Act of 1969. The law did raise safety requirements, but from the White House to the coal face beneath the ground it has been sabotaged. President Nixon began the process by dismissing John F. O'Leary, who might well have been a do-something director of the Bureau of Mines. Then he permitted the office to remain vacant for seven months. [President Nixon has since appointed as director of the Bureau Dr. Elburt F. Osborn, a geologist who had been vice president at Penn State. He also appointed Edward D. Failor, a lawyer from Dubuque, Iowa, to the $30,000-a-year job of enforcing the coal mine safety standards for the Bureau. Mr. Failor, without mining experience of any kind, has been a fund-raiser for the Republican Party in Iowa and was "an early lieutenant" of F. Clifton White in the 1964 Draft Goldwater movement. He has also served as lobbyist for the Iowa Association of Coin-Operated Laundries—*Editors.*] Enforcement of the Act began in a bumbling fashion, and a challenge by Kentucky and Virginia mine owners resulted in court suspension of the penalties for 2,300 infractions found by inspectors. Now, more than nine months after the effective date of the law, there are 250 fewer mine inspectors on the job than the 750 the Bureau claims it needs.

Congress passed the Coal Safety Act on December 30, 1969, and a year later to the day the Hyden mine blew up, killing thirty-eight workers and bringing the deaths for the year to 254, essentially the rate that has prevailed for years. Dr. Osborn commented that Hyden "was not unexpected," rightly noting that the passage of a statute does not stop such disasters. He called for both management and workers to become more safety conscious. No doubt safety education would be of value, but that is a pitiful remedy to propose in the face of a problem such as this one. If there were the will to do it, the death toll could be reduced by stringent enforcement. The problem is not knowledge of safety requirements or consciousness about safety. Mine operators know the requisites of mine safety as well as or perhaps even better than Dr. Osborn. The reason they permit unsafe conditions is very simple: it saves money. To rockdust a mine to reduce the explosiveness of coal dust is not expensive, but it does cost something. To rewire unsafe mining machinery that can ignite the fatal flash would cut profit margins. (The British often rewire American mining equipment to make it safe—why don't we?)

Miners themselves take risks; they prefer danger to unemployment. I have worked in a mine with incredible amounts of combustible dust covering miles of of underground passageways. What kind of economic system is it that forces a man to choose daily between risking his life unnecessarily or looking into the faces of his hungry children? No one who knows anything about eastern Kentucky will dare assert that the killings were the fault of those thirty-eight nonunion miners in Hyden.

In short, we can no longer permit the functioning of capitalism in the coal industry. Mine owners are apparently too irresponsible to be permitted to seek profits at such costs—hidden and essentially uncompensated costs—in human lives and suffering. Although the record of the Bureau of Mines does not greatly commend the federal government as more responsible than the industry itself, that may be in part because the Bureau is up against impossible opponents: profit seekers in competition with one another. If the only remedy is to eliminate competition in the industry, then eliminate it by taking over every mine in the nation. Then we could price coal at a level commensurate with the actual costs of safe production methods and let coal compete with other fuels under a set of rational regulations that take account not only of safety but ecological factors.

We can look to other nations for lessons in how to operate mines that do not suffocate, burn alive, crush to death, and otherwise mutilate miners. Our way has failed.

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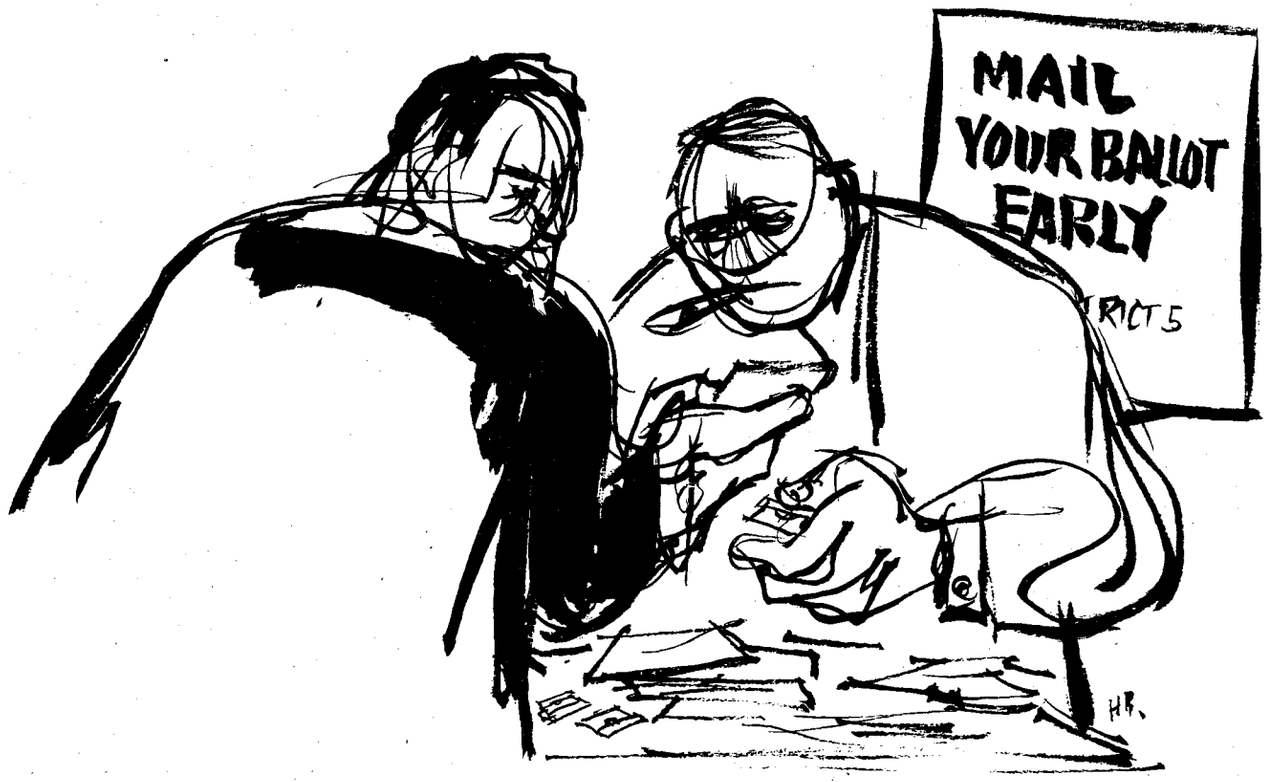

miners during the campaign, Miners for Democracy placed special emphasis on problems facing pensioners. Since the MFD candidates are all working miners—many of whom had been working six-day weeks last fall—they sought student help to reach some of the District's 7,000 pensioners in their homes in the coal camps. The students did reach about 700 of these men and their wives. Trudging up the steep hillsides where companies long ago built houses in neat, winding rows, and walking around the towering slate dumps which loom over every coal town, the students found the pensioners and their wives quite willing to welcome them into their homes, but generally reticent as to their opinions on the candidates.

Many men feared they would lose their pensions if they registered any opposition to the people who sign their pension checks. They had been receiving a barrage of leaflets expressing the Budzanoski-Boyle perspective. Many were visited by payrollers who offered to "assist" them if they were voting by absentee ballot.

District 5 is the only fully autonomous UMWA district in the United States, and last April, in open violation of the international UMWA constitution, its convention passed a provision whereby a pensioner may vote by absentee ballot instead of going down to his local's polling place. The Budzanoski-Seddon-McCallister leadership felt it had to guarantee its re-election by instituting this innovation, since very few pensioners thought their secret ballots would remain secret, and many felt compelled to vote for the candidates favored by those who might examine their ballots. The pensioner did not mail his completed absentee ballot to his own local, but directly to the District office in Pittsburgh. "It's like voting against Nixon and sending your ballot to the White House," MFD candidate Megi Segedi put it. Most working miners and some pensioners opposed this illegal change, but Budzanoski was able to control the proceedings of the District convention because of the existence of the forty generally conservative all-pensioner locals, also a violation of the international constitution.

After the votes were counted from all the polls, everyone was stunned by the results. Even though the Budzanoski slate had the vast financial resources of the UMWA at its disposal; even though it had up-to-date membership lists and dozens of payroll men to visit members to "help" them with their absentee ballots or even buy their votes; even though the incumbents could take jobs away and offer others as bribes, the insurgents won. When the more than 8,000 votes cast at the polls were counted, Lou Antal had won by 514 votes, Joe Daniels led the contest for Secretary-Treasurer by 670 votes, and Nick DeVince was ahead in the balloting for international board member by 350.

But 1,192 absentee ballots remain to be counted. So much evidence of tampering with these ballots was presented that the Department of Labor stepped in. Publicly, Budzanoski appears confident he will receive enough of these votes to take the election. Even if he does, he is not absolutely assured of remaining in office, for he and John Seddon are currently fighting a federal indictment for embezzling and misappropriating union funds.

Joseph Daniels, MFD candidate for Secretary-Treasurer of District 5, and Megi Segedi originally made the charges of ballot tampering against Budzanoski and his henchmen. ("We walked in and found them with razor blades in their hands and with glue dripping from their fingers.") There has been such a tradition of corruption among UMWA officers that many rank-and-file miners just don't

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believe anyone would seek office for unselfish reasons. At a November 15th rally in Fredericktown, Pa., Daniels commented: "I have had some people say to me, 'Well, you vote out one bunch of crooks and another bunch of crooks comes in.' Now, wait a minute! A man like that is stupid. Everybody's not crooked. There are people with character; there are people with integrity; and there are people that are honest." While Daniels' public statements sound convincing, his actions and those of his fellow candidates speak even more effectively. All these men have been offered well-paying, easy jobs with the District 5 office. When they turned down these offers, many of them were smeared and even physically threatened. Such men can't be labeled opportunists, except perhaps in the sense of opportunism to which Antal pleads guilty: "We're opportunists to this extent: this campaign offers an opportunity to turn this union of ours around and put it on the right track. It's an opportunity for you to select the leadership that will be for the benefit of the membership."

A staunch supporter of Miners for Democracy from Daniels' own local in Banning is Guido Simboli. Mr. Simboli worked in the mines for seventeen years, until a back and leg injury disabled him permanently four years ago. Now, after four years, his UMWA Welfare and Hospital Card has been taken away from him. He will have to wait six years, until he is 55, before he can collect a cent of his pension and get his card back again. Guido has the required twenty years for a union pension if the four years he collected union hospitalization benefits are added to his seventeen years in the mines, as the fund's guidelines specify. Yet he cannot be absolutely certain the fund will abide by this regulation.

In the past, Simboli has been offered cash outright and been promised well-paying office jobs in exchange for his support of Boyle, Budzanoski and their henchmen. Like so many other coal miners, whose personal financial difficulties would seem to dictate acceptance of these offers, Mr. Simboli has flatly rejected them.

William Finley was one of the four Miners for Democracy candidates who were running for positions on the four-man District 5 Executive Board. Although he looks 35, Finley graduated from Hickory High School back in 1936, first in his class. Hoping to become a doctor, he went to Lincoln University in Jefferson City, Mo., making the dean's list his first year. He returned to Westland, Pa., in the summer of 1938, expecting to work at the job he'd previously held with Pittsburgh Consol—then and now the nation's largest coal company —to make some money for the following year at Lincoln. Since Consol was laying off its full-time employees in the late 1930s, Finley didn't have a chance. Without money, Finley couldn't even return to college in the fall, but stayed home in Westland, looking for work.

Like so many other men in the coal fields, he couldn't find steady employment until the war began. With the demand for coal high, Finley worked in the mines throughout the 1940s. In the fifties, probably remembering his ambition to become a doctor, he began working in a hospital for $140 a month. His salary never rose above $220 a month until he returned to the mines in the early 1960s. Today, Finley has accumulated twenty-three years in mining, all in Consol mines.

If Finley had won on December 8 (he trails by 100 votes before the counting of the absentee ballots), he would have been the first black man to be elected to such a high position in District 5. A strong campaign to overcome racism among many of Finley's white union brothers is probably needed before he can win. Although many coal miners are aware of the importance of worker solidarity, others—especially many retired miners—made comments during the campaign such as, "I'm not voting for the Miners for Democracy ticket. I heard there's a nigger running on it." The insurgents cannot simply hope these racist feelings will go away; they must fight to eliminate them.

The difficulties a black candidate faces in mobilizing support are illustrated by the way in which Finley won the endorsement from his local for the position of district executive board member. (Each candidate for this position needs the endorsement of one local, preferably his own local.) Harry Rossi, the President of Westland Local 2026, also wanted the nomination; he planned to run on the Budzanoski ticket. In the September 19th nominating meeting at the Westland Miners Hall, Rossi called for the "hall to divide" on the nomination—for all those men supporting him to walk to one side of the hall, for all those favoring Finley to go to the opposite side. Knowing that many of Local 2026's white members would be afraid to support him publicly, Finley called for a secret ballot. His motion passed; the secret balloting was held the following week, and Finley won the nomination overwhelmingly.

The miners in District 5 see their struggle in a context much larger than just one district election fight. They feel they are continuing the coal miner's long tradition of militancy. They see their struggles in southwestern Pennsylvania as a part of the struggle throughout the coal fields—in Farmington, W. Va. or in eastern Kentucky. That is why Boyle and Budzanoski are so anxious to defeat the men who have pledged, "If we are elected, Tony Boyle knows where we want to go. We want to go out into these other districts and help them in every way, shape, or form that we can." The 55,000 miners of West Virginia, disenfranchised in the sense that there is no district in the state where they can vote for district officers, will certainly be among the first to demand autonomy for themselves in the wake of an Antal-Daniels-DeVince victory. It was the miners' union that provided the money and the organizers thirty-five years ago to set up the Steelworkers' union, the Auto Workers' union, the Rubber Workers' union. Coal miners feel it is ironic that these very unions they helped create have advanced so far beyond their own once strong union.

Miners for Democracy sought student help in their campaign; the students didn't go to them first. Not at all hostile to "outsiders," the miners are eager that people in other regions come to understand their struggles more deeply and mobilize support for them in the future.

Coal miners are well aware of problems our society faces today. National priorities are tragically clear in the coal fields: corporate profits always take priority over their

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own health and lives. When a miner retires or dies, and stops producing coal, society has little use for him or for his widow and family. The position of a miner's widow is especially difficult. The widow of a working miner gets $5,000 in benefits over a five-year period after his death; the widow of a retired miner gets $2,000. In a time when unemployment is rising everywhere and, as always, is especially high in the coal camps, women in Appalachia stand little chance of getting jobs to support themselves and their families. The only answer Tony Boyle and the union have for these women is, "Go seek federal or state help." Antal says this answer is "like hitting them with a wet, soggy rag. They've used her husband; they can't use her, so they're through with them. It wasn't meant to be that way. Her part in our struggle certainly helped." Coal miners are proud to be miners. Rather than abandon their occupation, as certain of their "friends" have recently urged, the miners want to improve working conditions in the mines and raise the quality of life in the coal camps.

Miners are very similar to other militant workers around the country, with the addition that their lives are on the line every time the cage goes down. In the closing days of the election campaign, four miners were killed in District 5 alone. The deaths of thirty-eight more men in Hyden, Ky., on December 30 dramatized the unsafe mining conditions which claimed 254 lives last year. Disputes between miners and operators over safety conditions have heated up in the wake of this latest disaster: wildcat strikes have hit several mines in western Pennsylvania and northern West Virginia in recent days.

The miners in District 5 and around the country want to recapture their union, so that it will once again be their strong weapon against their enemies—the coal companies. They want, of course, to end corruption and financial mismanagement in their union, but even more, they want a *fighting* leadership. While they may ask for government assistance at times (as in the present conflict over the absentee ballots), miners do not trust the federal government, especially under the Nixon Administration. They know the government has never helped them create a militant leadership, even though at times it has been forced to accede to certain of their demands. They have had too much evidence recently with the Railroad workers' strike and the Postal workers' strike—to believe that anyone other than themselves is going to fight for their interests. A strong and widespread rank-and-file movement is the only guarantee of progress in the coal mines.

Coal is a booming industry today. Production rose rapidly in the late 1960s; in the early seventies, it will reach new all-time highs in the United States. The process of converting coal into gasoline and natural gas will soon be perfected and huge new markets will have been created. Coal already produces, and will continue to produce, more than half of the nation's electricity.

Hundreds of wildcat strikes have been called in recent months and years to settle local grievances upon which the UMWA hierarchy failed to act. To win a good contract next October, a countrywide show of strength by the rank and file may be necessary. The coal companies and the federal government are already preparing for this possibility. They are already blaming fuel shortages on strikes by coal miners. One day next fall, it is said, the miners may be responsible for shutting off the nation's lights. If that should happen, everyone should keep in mind just who it is that keeps those lights on every other day of the year.

If the Department of Labor finds there is no evidence of tampering with the absentee ballots, Miners for Democracy will challenge the legality of the absentee ballot provision inserted in the 1970 District 5 constitution, in violation of the international constitution. But even if these ballots are ultimately thrown out, many miners around the coal camps and union halls feel "Boyle will try and take over our District. You know he's not going to give Lou any money to run things." (Boyle can place the District under his "trusteeship" because of debts the District has accumulated during Budzanoski's tenure.) But if Boyle tries that, the miners add, "You'll see some real action here and everywhere else in the coal fields." □

LONDON LETTER

DOWNHILL TO DUTSCHKE

RAYMOND WILLLIAMS
Mr. Williams, the distinguished social critic and historian, has for some years been The Nation's *London correspondent.*

Cambridge

Last summer, in a college garden in Cambridge, an American said to me that England must be one of the last peaceful and civilized places left, and that he didn't know how to collect the nervous energy to go back to his own country. He was a likable man, and I didn't want to argue with him. Ten years ago the more likely remark would have expressed surprise that one could live in such a backwater, and that one ought to move on (the arrangements could be made) to a more vital society. In neither case could I have agreed. Either judgment is that of a visitor, picking up only part of the truth. But all I said, standing in the garden, was that perhaps England would be left to serve the 20th century as a rest area from political battles elsewhere. As it happened, I had just been interviewing Rudi Dutschke, the German student leader, who was convalescing in England and now wanted to come to Cambridge to do research. I had discussed his project on Lukács and written a letter of recommendation.

Six months later, copies of that letter were before a

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state tribunal in London. Dutschke was to be excluded from Britain on the ground that he had taken part in political discussions with people living here and with visitors. The shock of that decision is still very deep in this country, especially in Cambridge, where Dutschke has become greatly liked and respected by many, including those who don't share his politics. I have heard experienced liberals asking themselves, in a kind of daze, whether this can be the country they know. Evidence offered against Dutschke showed a network of surveillance by political police and perhaps by informers. Telephone tapping had to be accepted as fact. I don't think any event of recent years has caused so much astonishment and outrage in the liberal and academic worlds. Yet there the system was, all the time, at the edge of that college garden.

I was surprised myself by the crude and arbitrary expulsion. It is one of a score of events, over the last four years, in which experienced observers have underestimated the outcome of critical issues. When this happens, one knows sooner or later that one is living through a period of deep change, in which the habitual bearings of the society, its tones, its methods, its expectations, are eroding. It can be called the end of an illusion, but that is too simple. Of course there have been enough crude and arbitrary acts before, but if one has lived any time in Britain it is difficult not to feel the sharpening deterioration, the growing strain and crisis, of these last few years and months. I date it essentially from spring 1966, when the newly elected Labour government, in a show of strength, challenged not the currency speculators but the striking seamen. That symbolic decision closed a whole perspective of liberal and social democratic thought and action. It was followed by the Labour attempt to control trade unions, and to hold down wages. The damage done there seems to have lost Labour the election. For the attempt to control the unions had split the Left, and driven away many militants. The attempt to hold down wages was followed, in 1970, by one of the great years of working-class economic advance, in which a whole series of favorable wage settlements was pushed through. That advance is almost the only victory we have had in years.

But of course it was incompatible with the norms of this managed capitalist economy, in a period of relative weakness. Inflation has been rapid, and the Tories' strongest point, at the election, was the promise to stop the rise in prices. The rise has continued, even faster than before; relatively large wage settlements are still being sought and sometimes won. There has been a whole series of strikes in public utilities, and the new Tory government has been actively seeking confrontation with the unions: a suitable enough sequel to Wilson's battle with the seamen in 1966. When the electricity supply men staged their slowdown in December, there were widespread power cuts and, in a context of understandable public irritation, the media mounted perhaps the most vicious attack of recent years on the workers. A new edge of anger was now in the open, just at the moment when the Tories were introducing their version of a bill to control the unions.

There is a campaign against the bill, by the official union leadership, and in a way by the Labour Party, though their own bill is clearly remembered and there have been some remarkable semantic exercises, by their spokesmen, on the "Labour Bill good, Tory Bill bad" theme. Nobody is convinced. Unofficial union groups have brought about several successful strikes against the bill, and will continue to do so. But what happened to the Labour Party while in power has left a political vacuum, and the struggle is confused. The new Tory government has dropped the bland upper-class style of the Macmillan era, and is in a surprisingly open way a crudely aggressive and insulting administration. We know whom they represent, in real economic terms, but in style they are the angry petit bourgeoisie—all the old theatrical Toryism gone and replaced by the sharp accents of economic, political and social revenge.

It has been thought since the fifties that any British Government must play to the consensus, manipulate compromises, hold the middle ground. These unusually small, bitter, confused men are at least putting that theory to the test of contradiction. On most available issues, they are opening and widening gaps, provoking conflict, sharpening moods. That is part of the new experience, and it permits a partial but inadequate explanation of the deterioration in life here. It is a convenient explanation for the Labour leaders; they can try to present their own time as sweet in retrospect. But though this style of openly divisive administration is new, it has an essential continuity with what I see as the decisive turning point, when Wilson attacked the working class that had elected him in 1966.

All through this period, by one means or another, the failure to create significant new growth and wealth has been politically unloaded onto the unions, and the central strategy of both governments has been to get wages under control. But they are doing this in a low-wage economy, to a working class that has had long enough, since the war, to get used to rising expectations. Unlike many apparently similar societies, Britain has a large (two-thirds) proletarian majority, and our unions, though often limited, are still part of a political movement. This leads to certain continuities: certain limits but also certain strengths. It is this majority, in these institutions, that is now regularly being fought. One method after another, one style after another, to beat them down, have failed. What is important now is that the attempt is being made through law, and through a series of confrontations in the public services which bring direct hardship to ordinary people. The political consequences of all this may well be incalculable.

When that historic moment arrived, in 1966, a group of us broke away to the Left. But I think it has never been noted that the date of our first manifesto, May Day 1967, was also the date of Enoch Powell's first major speech on immigration, a very marked move to the political Right. I remember looking in the papers, when our manifesto was published, in the not very strong hope that there might be some brief report. The papers I picked up were full of Powell verbatim at length. I don't know that I appreciated the full significance at the time. The consensus was breaking both ways. Of course

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many Socialist writers had predicted this: the usual thesis of polarization. In a society like this, the full process may take years, but while there has been some real growth on the Left we would be fools not to notice that the growth on the Right, in many forms, has been spectacular. Powell himself is still an isolated but constantly visible figure. But in one way after another the strength of the intolerant Right has grown, and the style of the new Tory government depends on this. They seem genuinely convinced that in any confrontation they can carry public opinion and win. They may well be wrong. The disruption of ordinary life to which their policies are leading may have simple and traditional political effects, pulling them back to consensual Tory government or, eventually to the return of Labour. But let us consider what follows if they are right. A political and economic victory over the unions would have been accompanied by a successful offensive against radical and liberal individuals and institutions. Neither course would have solved—for neither can solve—the deep underlying crises of the economy and the society. What then?

Some on the Right may be thinking of an answer, but as far as most get is "Europe": joining the Common Market with this cleaned-up society. Yet that is no solution either, as most supporters and opponents of joining now agree; no solution at least in any immediate future, while the act of joining would itself create very severe transitional economic strains. That could be the moment, of course, of the lurch back to Labour; the attempted replay of the sixties. But the question I have been asking myself, over the last few months, is whether at that point a different kind of move to the Right might be attempted. It is never easy to put this question in Britain. Most of us still believe that the worst can't happen here; that the pullback to the center, to compromise, is always in the end the strongest. That is still my own view.

But I remember my earlier point: how consistently, these last years, most of us have underestimated events. To have talked five years ago, in Cambridge, of our telephones being tapped, of informers, *agents provocateurs,* political police, would have sounded melodramatic to almost everyone. But in fact it was already happening then; the main difference now is that more people know about it, and are having to fit it into their version of the normal. Or take the fact that we say Britain is a peaceful society: unarmed police, and so on. But in Northern Ireland for more than a year there have been repeated bloody conflicts in the streets, and for all the complexities of Irish politics, the events in Ulster feed back into the British mainstream in ways that prevent any dismissal as a regional conflict. Or again, when two bombs were exploded on the night of the demonstration against the union bill, in the house of the Minister who had introduced it, people began saying, "I thought it couldn't happen here," and the sense of some transition, some point passed, was again—though reluctantly—recorded. The Minister's wife, who by good fortune narrowly escaped injury, was reported as saying that she knew this was a permissive society but the bombs were incredible. And in fact there is enough deep and confused feeling about a range of issues—strikes, drugs, demonstrations, pornography—to make any prolonged political crisis dangerous.

I know that I am speaking to people in the United States who have seen very much more of all these events and developments. It could be said, simply, that British society, in still small and local ways, is going along that same path. But I have the feeling that we have much less room for absorption, as well as incomparably less material resources. And one has to consider the effect of this kind of crisis on a people who, for good and ill, have been accustomed to milder and more blurred conflicts for a long time now, and who are asking themselves new questions as the harder edge begins to show through.

In my last article, just before the election ["London Letter: Saying 'No' to Labour," *The Nation,* June 15, 1970], I gave a rather bleak account of the political scene. A close friend and neighbor happened to read it in Australia, where he was teaching for six months, and he thought there must be something wrong with me to be that depressed. He telephoned to say that now he is back he knows what I had meant, and agrees with it. I said I still hoped we were both wrong.

And in fact when I meet students and trade unionists, though I am uneasy I see strength: a confident strength. Forces are still coming through, paradoxically, of a deeply radical and democratic kind: a willingness to fight our own battles, do our own organizing, take up new intellectual work; exert remarkably active resistance to the new intolerance, as the fight-back over the expulsion of Dutschke has shown. A new Open University has just started, teaching part-time by television, radio and correspondence: a wonderfully promising development. And the workers' marches: the men and women are not only well dressed but relaxed, smiling, confident. In any assessment of human resources I'd still say we're all right; this is still a good country, and the good people are in the majority.

But the persistent problem is political, in the strictest sense. The change in the Labour Party leaves no adequate political channel, for defense or for advance, and though we shall eventually make one it may take some time. So all the struggles that are now going on are relatively piecemeal, relatively isolated. It's from that stimulating but vulnerable experience that some of us now look, critically and seriously, at the undoubted dangers, the unmistakable arbitrariness and reaction, which the new Tory leaders represent. We see the paradox of these small men who have in their hands, and seem willing to use more and more, the still formidable powers of the state. They will be fought, of course, but obviously that fight is going to be long and hard. □

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BOOKS & THE ARTS

Epic for a Bad Century

MAXIMUM SECURITY WARD. *By Ramon Guthrie. Farrar, Straus & Giroux. 143 pp. $7.50.*

ALEXANDER LAING
Mr. Laing wrote "The Nation *and its Poets" for the 100th anniversary issue of this journal in 1965. His own verse has appeared here, as well as in* The Atlantic, Harper's, Saturday Review *and other periodicals.*

"Sure, I know," the poet casually admits on page 10, "Intensive Care Ward, but none the less, / straight out of Jacques Callot by Hogarth," a hint that the particular hospital area in which the opening action erupts as hilarious fantasy is symbolically enlarging as the poem progresses, to become the global Maximum Security Ward in which all of us are confined. The first conflict emerges between settled-for routines of physicians or their surrogates and the extreme needs, spiritual even more than physical, of a desperately ill protagonist.

Speakless, can you flex your omohyoid
and whinny ninety-nine?

* * *

(Nurse, clamp the necrometer when I
say when.
If he passes out, tickle his nose with a
burning feather
and tweak his ears counterclockwise.)

Between such wild moments of mutual misapprehension, the huge sweep of this work of apocalyptic vision laced by ribald wit is being deftly sketched in for later development, in a symphony nicked by the syncopation of contrasting styles. Breaks and changes in the interweaving movements may well have originated as twists upon the pivots of physical anguish; but they serve to reflect the disorganizations of purpose and accomplishment in the technological morass of our bad century. As trained operatives and operators fulfill their rituals, taking nearness of death for granted, the poet-patient's real concerns emerge. His greatest need is not medical; it is for a scribbled word from his mistress of an earlier time. Why does she not write? As with the other swift evocations that tantalize and subside in these first few pages, the reason appears later in the poem. The conditions of wizardry and metamorphosis are to be taken into account. We presently come to Mélusine's warning of long ago:

("I cannot write," she said. "For me a
letter
is artifice that only enhances distance
and
aggravates the ache of separation."
Clasping my hand
beneath a café table at Montparnasse.)

Even though this was the irrational condition to the magic of her love, recurrent desperate appeals that she relent nevertheless become the poet's means of conveying us into the enlarging recollections and visions of an extraordinary life. We snap back now and then to the original intensive care ward for more moments of dark comedy, but these quickly evoke other memories, or sometimes fearful lunges of the imagination such as those in the two linked movements near the end: "Apocalypse," and "The Brocken."

Time's truth is not sequential in such circumstances. The first unified movement beyond the subtly crafted tumult at outset evokes

Montparnasse
that I shall never see again, the Mont-
parnasse
of Joyce and Pound, Stein, Stella Bowen,
little Zadkine, Giacometti . . . all gone
in any case,
and would I might have died, been
buried there.

Guthrie's great theme, like that of his slightly younger acquaintance, Hemingway, is the confrontation of death. Something of the distinction in their ways of bringing it to a literary focus appears in their personal responses to impending dissolution as writing men. Hemingway put a gun in his mouth. Guthrie, throughout two years of operations, transfusions, hemorrhages, in his "frantic bramble of / glass and plastic tubes and stainless steel," gripped a smaller implement in his fingers and kept it moving against paper whenever the muscles would respond to the will at all. It should be said in fairness that Hemingway knew his major work was long ago done, while Guthrie was wracked by the insistence of this cumulative challenge in what he had sufficient reason to regard as the slipping last months of a much less exploited life.

For the highest passage of his fine, neglected book *Graffiti*, published twelve years ago, the poet had catalogued the deaths he should have died, in a cluster of events in the Spanish Civil War and the "Republic of Silence"—the French underground with which, during his hitch in the OSS of World War II, he had been closely in contact:

There are those to whom
death is the snapping of a violin string
strained to too shrill an ecstasy.
Then there are also
young men's deaths
like a puppy's lunge parting a frayed
leash.

Some of the curtly catalogued episodes upon which these lines are a central comment have been heightened in the present book. Gabriel Péri, unnamed when the manner of his death was alluded to in *Graffiti*, here appears in his explicit defiance at Mont-Valérien:

Gabriel Péri who died "pour des len-
demains
qui chantent." (O doux Jésus! That sing
at Ben-Suc?
My-Lai?) No morrow within the span
of any now
on earth will ever sing again. All you
who died in hope *were dupes, though*
none the less christoi.

With the word *"christoi"* we come to the central problem of this poem, for the reader as it was for the poet himself. Guthrie's purpose emerges as nothing less than an assessment of the performance of mankind in his time, with extensions for perspective into earlier times and across the edge of what he assumes is likely to be man's curt and songless morrow. His intention thus is epic, calling for the epic's essential means of measuring humanity: a hero. His problems included the breakdown of conventional heroism in our age, crafty Odysseus fetching up as feckless Willy Loman. There could be no single representative hero in the lurid shambles of our performance. Gradually, as this epic poem evoked itself in the clairvoyance of pain, the hero became the *christos*. It was not a sudden, clear symbol. The poet discussed it with friends at his bedside, and for a while rendered it as its cognate, *chosen*. That form of the meaning proved in use to have too many established prior associations. He returned to the more arcane but precise *christos*.

Explication of the *christoi* will provide a challenge to graduate students for some time to come. Christ is surely one of the *christoi*, although this is merely hinted at in the poem. What will at first be puzzling to routine inspectors is the clear evidence that not all of the others are Christ-like.

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The category reaches to cover Proust:

The pampered little pederast chose nameless God
and, choosing God, chose agony and abnegation,
perpetual adoration.

Proust could not have been omitted, as one element of measure, since Guthrie in the long and puzzling hiatus in his public career as a poet—thirty-two years—taught the most famous of academic Proust courses with an unexampled devotion. Upon his retirement from teaching he had reread the shimmering anti-epic from beginning to end thirty-one times, always newly for fresh revelations before the semester's work began. This is to be noted, among other reasons, in partial explanation of the poet's own continually exquisite attention to phrase and symbol, nowhere more significantly than in his poem's many rowdy colloquial passages, so rough and so right. The refinement of their rightness can be traced back through multiple drafts—to shame, if their self-shame is not enough, the swarm of easy writers who have spilled their lax verses across the last decade or two.

The chameleon *christos*, complex hero of this epic, derives his most important characteristic from Baudelaire's cry for the strength

to do my duty immediately every day
and thus become a hero and a saint—

but Guthrie cautions us that *"Hero* is apt to be preempted / for such as Achilles, Nelson, Guynemer, Frank Luke,"—also that *saint* is a troublesome category including "Dominic who dearly loved a whiff / of sizzling flesh enhanced by screams." As he ticks off candidates he notes the derivation from "anoint." They are the "Anointed, elect, chosen. / Chosen by whom? / Why, by themselves, I think. / Settle for christos, christoi."

Yes, they *did the choosing. Chose once for all*
and then again at every moment. Wisdom learned
at every choice making the next choice harder—
and easier!

The instance follows of Cézanne, "stopping to wash his brush after every stroke," and next, Proust:

Proust—one book of a million-and-a-quarter words.
Every image, balancing of shape and sound, intonation,
every pattern of texture or construction,
every rhythm, color, tint, a choice—

From this opinion so profoundly earned Guthrie has confronted the harder and harder choices of his own writing, each easier because for one who has elected the discipline of a *christos* in the first place there can be no other choice than to wash the brush of choice itself clean after every phrase.

I must not dilute the pleasures of insight into the complexity of the concept for each discovering reader. Like other major works of literature, *Maximum Security Ward* will stimulate conflicting analysis. How can its *christoi* embrace literary recluses such as Proust along with rough creative activists: the murderer Villon, the gun runner Rimbaud? What have the *christoi* Luther Burbank and Einstein in common? Why is an unsuccessful painter, here called A. P. Yorick, admitted among the famous?

Some of them are indeed Titans
but I am struck by so many of them
being ordinary men differing from their neighbors
only by speaking out when others are keeping silent,
by saying "No" when others are giving dull assent

* * *

What did he mean (this insurance executive) by
"The common man is the common hero?"

One of the insurance executive's best-known poems evokes thereupon a parody, which is perhaps the deftest page in this volume. Under the highly appropriate title "Caduceus," words arranged into two serpents and a rod may, if the eye so follows them, be read as three separate poems, each sufficient to its own statement; but all three are more richly readable together, if you can manage it.

The heroic *christoi* appear, for better definition, among titans and ordinary men who have chosen heroism or have had a heroic moment thrust upon them. "Death With Pants On"—one of several recollections of Guthrie's service in the rattletrap biplanes supplied by profiteers in World War I—gives us a glimpse of the ace of aces Guynemer in Harry's Bar, "no more godlike/than any other slight tubercular boy of 22." But as much space has been earlier allotted to an unnamed Cockney who casually requested "the loan of your Enfield for a sec— / just to kinder finish up the job," upon having discovered that his scrotum had been shot to rags.

As the *christoi* provide us with distinct vistas for assessing the outward circumstances of recent humanity, through real persons and their behavior, a weaving strand of metamorphoses is the poet's device for introspection and the consideration of man's nature as he wriggles in the grip of the supernatural. Much of it is dark indeed, but even the heart-raveling death of the *christos* Desnos, soon after his rescue by Czech guerrillas from the last of his concentration camps, takes on its pity and grandeur in the light of life, its opposite. Life too is here, seen best in the clear morning world of the troubadours, who provide the poet with the happiest of his metamorphoses. This is natural because Guthrie's first two books of poems, and his first novel that came between them, all in the middle twenties, drew with delight upon the spirit of 12th-century Provence.

Speaking first in the character of Marsyas, rawly appropriate for his sanguine hospital experience, he makes one of his abrupt metamorphoses:

I am a crude,
goat-footed, flute-playing, wineskin-sucking
lout that would as soon
screw a Muse as look at her. Sooner maybe.
Depending how she looked.

I, Arnaut Daniel, was born at Ribérac.
I am one honest-to-God good *poet.*

* * *

A couple of years from now
it will be spring again
and I shan't be around to see it.
Willows budding in the meadow, gentians,
jonquils in the woods, girls twittering
in patches of sunlight by the river,
giggling and squealing and hiking up their petticoats
thigh-high to wade ankle-deep trickles in the field,
and I not be there.

A few such bars of sunlight interrupt this austere vision, but most of the metamorphoses take us into darker parts of the forest. In one passage of summary they are brought to a revealing pause:

"I am called Marsyas and Merlin
I am called Ishmael and Icarus
My hide hangs on a thorn bush in Thessaly
The spells I taught her still imprison me
in a copse of the forest of Broceliande
Those are my limp lifeless legs that the sheep sees splashing into the harbor
Evenings at the water hole I lap with the jackals
We snarl but make room for each other
We share our kill Hagar before she died
taught me to make slings and harden sharp sticks in fire
(Shyly) I am also called Yorick."

Thus the metamorphoses of spirit, drawn from ancient and medieval myth, are brought into coincidence (shyly) with the least of the real contemporary external *christoi*, A. P. Yorick. This is not to identify the poet with the unsuccessful painter. Guthrie is in fact a remarkable artist in oils as well as a poet. He simply knows what it is to be poor Yorick quite as well as he knows what it was to be Icarus, observed at the ignominious end

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of a tremendous adventure only by Breughel's sheep. This poet too had had his wings burned off in the sky "when a Sopwith disintegrated / at a thousand feet with me in part of it." The question of Guthrie's identification with his *christoi* is summed up in a section entitled, from Beyle, *"Visse, Scrisse, Amó,"* which should prove frustrating to any orderly soul who seeks among the *christoi* a basis for a new hagiolatry. Having appealed uselessly to all other sources of mercy and grace, here the poet addresses for the last time his—

Gamut of goddesses, tear-channeled cheeks
and rough-hewn, yearning vulva of Rosmertha,
mother, sister, mistress of the dead.

But this comes within a rich detailing of what was centrally declared in an earlier appeal to "Nerthus, Frigg (Friday's girl), / Rosmertha and You / the veiled and nameless one"—

For now,
surveying that churned wake, I know
that by some slip or quirk,
I have led a stranger's life, known with his mind,
Spoken with his tongue, kissed with his lips,
worshipped or denied his gods . . .
(Mix-up in cloak-room checks—sole-print perhaps)
and now must die this death of his for him.

Does this lead us all the way to Golgotha? I do not believe that to be the intention. As a teacher, Guthrie has often had occasion to stress the metaphysical point that a poem instructs its author concerning matters he did not know he intended when he wrote it. It is enough to remark of this passage that the poet, well aware, has stood for man among the monstrous idiocies of men's contriving.

There is a grace note just before the end, in the last but earliest of the poet's metamorphoses; suddenly he is speaking in the character of a paleolithic cave artist, of his lung-wracking swim along an inky underground stream with no assurance of head room when breath gives out, "a chance / a man must take." The swimmer, seeking the remotest rock surface upon which to carve his votive bear, gropes to a ledge at last where he can open his bladder-bag of fire-making equipment and flints. Flame reveals a wall—

that I had known since childhood
yet never seen before. I saw it now
even to the scratches other men,
knowing the place for what it was, had made
ages before me. Some of their animals were not
like ours.

Here the parable begins to emerge. The artist, answerable to his own choices, comes through uttermost effort to the best that others have done. He nevertheless graves his bear in the paleolithic way on top of their masterpieces—and what else do we all do as we strive to make our uniqueness out of words and symbols hoarded for us upon the hard wall of tradition?

The tallow fails. A later return becomes necessary, through the black womb of the underground stream:

I gave him teeth and claws. Then last of all
he took on eyes and nostrils. When he began to breathe
I stopped and snuffed the wick, safe in his
protection, slept.

"The Making of the Bear" is more than an evocative symbol of every artist's search along a hard way toward the ideal and unique; it recapitulates the high desperation, the tussle of absolute need against too little time, that precedes it in the symphony which it so magnificently climaxes. The variations of anguish and outrage, spiked with raucous high and low comedy, flow suddenly here into a sweet simplicity of idiom and of narration that marks many of the finest passages in literature.

When this movement was published last spring as a double spread in *The New Yorker* its author was sinking into a coma thought by his physicians to be terminal. He was unconscious when his old friend Malcolm Cowley accepted for him the Marjorie Peabody Waite award of $1,500 for "continuing achievement and integrity" in his art. Some weeks later he opened his eyes and proposed that he stay around until he could hold his book in his hand. He got the feel of it at the end of November. In mid-January he gave a public reading.

About a year ago a director of the publishing house that was shortly to consider its acceptance asked me what I thought of Guthrie's manuscript. Speaking consciously in a critical vacuum, there having been little response anywhere to his remarkable prior writing, I used the unornamented single word "great," and was misunderstood. "Great for the decade?" he asked. "No," I assured him, "Great for the century," and I had in mind a century in need of greatness.

Seminal works of literature, such as this one, thrust their growing tips through a spent aesthetic past to make a new present. Nobody knew quite what to do with "Hugh Selwyn Mauberly" (hopelessly "out of key" with the age, as M. L. Rosenthal has noted) or with *The*

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Waste Land, already mentioned in two of the most prominent reviewing weeklies as a comparison for *Maximum Security Ward*. Both earlier poems siphoned antique nourishments, as Guthrie has done, into current mockeries that seemed frivolous. Both were influential in exposing a need to supplant the leached-out layers of recent critical assumption and method. Critics who do not begin by questioning our own recent habits of appraisal will have similar troubles with this unprecedented but deeply rooted poem. Credit is properly to be assigned to *The Nation*, and to M. L. Rosenthal who was then its poetry editor, for recognizing the qualities of "Ezra Pound in Paris and Elsewhere," a poem of some length printed here in 1957 to put an end to Guthrie's long silence as a public poet.

Rosenthal, one of the few critics who have concerned themselves with Guthrie, has included his work in three anthologies and discussed it in *The New Poets* (1967). And "Fiercer Than Evening Wolves," a movement from *Maximum Security Ward*, was published last April 13 in this magazine. It was in *The Nation*, too (July 7, 1969), that Germaine Brée concluded her review of his *Asbestos Phoenix* by stating that it "alone would place Ramon Guthrie among the major poets of the mid-century." The leap of genius in his new book begins at that level. Published seven weeks before its author's 75th birthday, it has little of the serene fullness of knowledge to be looked for at such a time. Rather it is an impassioned and anguished, but also rowdy and ribald, testament that all the reasons for despising and despairing of humanity are not quite reason enough. □

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Struggler in the Wilderness

COLLECTED POEMS. *By Basil Bunting. Horizon Press. 160 pp. $6.50.*

ROGER GUEDALLA
Mr. Guedalla teaches English at the State University of New York, Stony Brook.

Basil Bunting is primarily known as the author of the long poem *Briggflatts*, and as one of the two poets whom Ezra Pound celebrated as "strugglers in the wilderness" in the dedication of *Guide to Kulchur* in 1938. The other "struggler" was Louis Zukofsky who, like Bunting, has only recently begun to receive the widespread attention his work so clearly merits. A small press in Texas published Bunting's *Poems 1950* in that year but the book was poorly distributed and largely overlooked. It was not until fifteen years later that collections of his poems began to reappear, this time in England, culminating in 1968 with the publication of his *Collected Poems*, now reissued in paperback and readily available to all. For most of us this book provides our first comprehensive image of his work. It places *Briggflatts* in its true context as one of six long poems entitled "sonatas" and modeled on the musical form. The book also confirms Bunting as a poet who has worked all his life in two areas absolutely central to the development of 20th-century poetry. Pound's admonition, succinctly stated in the phrase "make it new," describes the concern of many modern poets, including Bunting, to refashion the past in terms of the present and to reaffirm the immediacy of past poetry in a contemporary context. Also, Bunting's use of the baroque sonata form as a structural model is comparable to Pound's and Zukofsky's use of the fugue, Yeats's use of the song cycle, and Eliot's "Preludes" and "Four Quartets." Those poets were attempting to confirm what Renaissance poets knew: that there must be a close link between music and poetry.

Born into a Quaker family in Newcastle in 1900, Bunting went to London at the age of 20. He left for Paris in 1924 and, except for the odd year or two, remained abroad until 1952. In that year, working as a foreign correspondent of *The Times* of London, he was expelled from Persia, along with all the other Western journalists. At various times he has lived in Northumberland, New York, Los Angeles, Rapallo, Tenerife, Teheran, Paris and London. He has worked as sub-editor, music critic, book reviewer, film extra, fisherman, sailor, foreign correspondent, Foreign Office official, army interpreter, and secretary to a Member of Parliament and to Ford Madox Ford. As he himself has said: "I've had a large experience of life. I've experienced enough things to fill my poems up with them. I haven't had to dig things out of books. It's a mistake for a literary man to spend all his time in his study. You can tell, can't you, when a poet puts somebody on horseback, whether he's ever done it himself?" The events inform the poetry. Crossing North Africa in the wake of the Eighth Army he writes:

> *Broken booty but usable*
> *along the littoral, frittering into the south.*
> *We marvelled, careful of craters and minefields,*
> *noting a new-painted recognisance*
> *on a fragment of fuselage, sand drifting into dumps,*
> *a tank's turret twisted skyward,*
> *here and there a lorry unharmed*
> *out of fuel or the crew scattered. . . .*

The poems are fashioned out of a particular experience of life.

In keeping with Bunting's varied life, his study of literature is eclectic—and highly idiosyncratic. The ear can detect in his poem the presence of Spenser, Villon, Dante, Whitman, Wordsworth and Mallarmé, as well as Pound. Yet Bunting, insofar as he is read and talked about, is almost always referred to simply as a Poundian. Pound's influence is clear, especially in the early poems, and Bunting received Pound's kindness and support in his youth, as did so many other poets. One does not so much need to play down Pound's influence as to put it in perspective and note, for example, that Bunting's use of alliteration and hard, compressed consonants derives as much from his independent reading of Anglo-Saxon as it does from his reading of Pound. The *Collected Poems* contains translations from Horace, Lucretius, Catullus, Firdosi, Rudaki,

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Sa'di, Manuchehri and Machiavelli. Other poems contain borrowings from earlier poets indicated by quotation marks and sometimes by footnotes as tantalizing as "parodies of Cino da Pistoia and Lucretius can do no damage and intend no disrespect," or, "the long quotations from Villon and Dante will of course be recognized." Still other poems incorporate material from other authors with only the most oblique indication. It is enough, for Bunting's purposes, that the reader be aware that he is "making it new." One recalls the stricture in *Briggflatts*, "follow the clue patiently and you will discover nothing." Bunting not only enjoys teasing scholars but also wishes to emphasize that the poem is a made object that stands on its own, uncluttered by notions of meaning that depend on an accumulation of dubiously relevant facts. His idea of poetry, deriving from his knowledge of music, has at its base a concept of multiplicity that specifically differentiates poetry from prose.

The musical model which was to provide him with a structural basis was the baroque sonata. The form is essentially simple, and it is capable of sustaining seemingly endless complexities in the hands of a skillful practitioner. Its inherent requirement of at least two voices, themes, or keys, which are stated, contrasted, developed, mixed, and eventually reconciled, provides an appropriate vehicle for the kind of literature Bunting believes poetry to be.

> Prose exists to convey meaning, and no meaning such as prose conveys can be expressed as well in poetry. This is not poetry's business. Poetry is seeking to make not meaning, but beauty; or if you insist on misusing words, its "meaning" is of another kind, and lies in the relation to one another of lines and patterns of sounds, perhaps harmonious, perhaps contrasting and clashing, which the hearer feels rather than understands; lines of sound drawn in the air which stir deep emotions which have not even a name in prose.

Bunting applies the sonata principle not only in the six poems so entitled but also in the briefer odes. The interested reader should examine Kenneth Cox's essay on *Villon* in *Stony Brook* where Cox's explication of the poem's thematic structure shows its affinity with the sonata form.

Another element which depends as much on musical as on literary principles is Bunting's love of the sound of words, especially brief words in thick tongue-twisting groups that almost defy articulation and demand close attention to every syllable. Examples abound in *Briggflatts*:

rut thud the rim,
crushed grit. . . .

Who sang, sea takes,
brawn brine, bone grit.
Keener the kittiwake. . . .

rat roommate, unreconciled. . . .

Tongue stumbles, ears err. . . .

Echoes of Pound's *Canto 1*, "men many, mauled with Bronze lance heads," or *The Seafarer*, "not any protector/May make merry man faring needy," may be misleading. Bunting found similar influences in his own reading and in music.

It is time to consider how Domenico Scarlatti
condensed so much music into so few bars
with never a crabbed turn or congested cadence,
never a boast or a see here. . . .

His admiration for Scarlatti, Corelli, Monteverdi, Vivaldi and other baroque composers lent impetus to his quest for tense precision. This expresses itself in his poetry in a variety of ways including

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his use of compressed epigrammatical, almost gnomic phrases:

It is easier to die than to remember . . .

often containing marvelous puns:

Every birth a crime,
Every sentence life.

But, whatever his experiences and readings may incorporate, they come together in the fashioning of what is really important: the poem.

Above all, the poem is conceived as a made thing, an object created with the care of a craftsman doing an essential job of work. Bunting denies the commonplace distinction made between artists and craftsmen. For him a poem is a finely wrought object; the better the poet's technical equipment the better the poem will be. Bunting has kept sixty-four of his poems for inclusion in the *Collected Poems*. He has discarded about six early poems and published two or three since the book appeared. Not a large output for a lifetime devoted to poetry that began fifty years ago and includes publication in Zukofsky's *Objectivist Anthology* and Pound's *Active Anthology* and *Profiles*. Bunting pares his work down, discarding and cutting poems for the sake not only of brevity but also of concision and precision. *Briggflatts* was originally 15,000 lines long, but there are only 700 lines in the published version. As he says in that poem,

Brief words are hard to find
shapes to carve and discard.

Bunting traveled too much and stayed away from universities for too long to be limited by a single school or group of poets. He defies classification, and his contribution to English poetry is unique. But this very independence seems to limit his reputation, much to the frustration of his admirers. Certainly many contemporary poets and critics have written well of him, including Robert Creeley, Hugh MacDiarmid, Allen Ginsberg, Hugh Kenner and Herbert Read, and slowly the circle of readers grows. If the function of poetry is, in Bunting's words, to "stretch the limits language sets to thought, to make other thoughts available, to make what was vague precise, what was unknowable knowable," then the sixty-four poems in this book demonstrate the full realization of that function.

A strong song tows
us, long earsick.
Blind, we follow
rain slant, spray flick
to fields we do not know.

Night, float us.
Offshore wind, shout,
ask the sea
what's lost, what's left,
what horn sunk
what crown adrift.
Where we are who knows
of kings who sup
while day fails? Who,
swinging his axe
to fell kings, guesses
where we go?

TELEVISION

HARRY RASKY

Mr. Rasky is a producer, director and writer of documentary films.

A sad thing happened to documentary films when they moved from theatre screens to the television tube—they died, and no one mourned. As one of the next of kin, with a twenty-year relationship to the doomed documentary, I may perhaps be forgiven the luxury of a eulogy for truth as it was once broadcast on the American air. It was a silent demise in the prime time of life. If that seems an overstatement, check the dial, station by station, network by network: between soap opera and canned comedy, from doctor show to lawyer film, from detective yarn to woolly Western, the documentary doesn't survive there—or anywhere—any more.

A few words about the ancestors. One must really go all the way back to Robert Flaherty, the American who started exploring for mineral deposits around Hudson Bay, and instead discovered the soul of the Eskimo. His *Nanook of the North* (1921) demonstrated the truth of Pascal's statement: "A strange justice that is bounded by a river! Can anything be more ridiculous than that a man should have the right to kill me because he lives on the other side . . . ?" Flaherty's was a search on the other side of the river.

Flaherty had to move on to England to do his other great work. He collaborated there with the hard-drinking, tough Scotch educator, John Grierson, who perhaps cursed us all by inventing the word "documentary," an inclusive term that absorbs almost anything that moves on film and isn't fiction. Grierson kept the tradition going, producing, among others, the splendid *Night Mail*. The romance of the nonfiction film still survives in England.

Of course some were made in America —*The River* and a few documentaries to explain that there really was a depression —but even from the beginning they were corrupted by that American escape from reality which, I suggest, was later to kill the art of actuality on American television.

In Britain, the BBC programmed documentaries in prime time from the start. Today, they frequently enjoy higher ratings than packaged Hollywood tedium. In my native Canada, a Grierson disciple named Sydney Newman, and others at the National Film Board, found government backing for films about the world around them. They are still among the best made anywhere today. Also in Canada, a tradition of nonfiction has been kept alive on television. As a result, Canadians will frequently choose the real situations over situation comedies, and prefer the drama of life to the drama of fiction.

If Flaherty was the grandfather of documentary films—and that happened by accident because he started searching for money and found movies more rewarding—then the father was the greatest broadcaster of all time, Ed Murrow—also I suggest by accident. He combined language and voice on radio with a skill that has yet to be equaled, teaming up with Fred Friendly to produce a radio program and record, *I Can Hear It Now* and *Hear It Now*.

On November 18, 1951, from TV studio 41, Murrow began: "This is an old team trying to learn a new trade." And there on the monitors were both the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans at once. At that historic moment, to actuality was added the dimension of immediacy. *See It Now* combined for the first time on a regular prime-time basis the adventure of newsreel and the thoughtfulness of radio. Murrow was the only superstar the documentary ever had. He was also a member of the board of directors of CBS. We other nonfiction film makers really did sleep better knowing he was there. But the sponsor of *See It Now* quietly dropped away; its evening prime spot was quietly relegated to now-and-again periods on Sunday afternoons. Did the American public cry out? Not a whimper.

John Crosby, who was then writing in a state of sustained anger for the New York *Herald Tribune*, cried out: *"See It Now* is by every criterion television's most brilliant, most decorated, most imaginative, most courageous and most important program. The fact that CBS cannot afford it, but can afford *Beat the Clock* is shocking." Crosby was eventually shocked enough to give up television criticism, and in fact to move to England.

However, the mid-fifties were exciting times for us, though you would never have known it if you weren't home watching on Sunday. (Our place has now been taken by the "jocks." Sunday moved from the mind to the body when it discovered sports. Beer sales boomed.)

Under the masterful hand of a Murrow man, Irving Gitlin, CBS assembled a documentary team, a dozen producers given freedom to find new areas of actuality. Gitlin was a rare combination of

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teacher and showman; when I joined him in 1956 I was surrounded by the most gifted group of film and television makers I have ever known. For a while there, on a wintry Sunday, you could go blind with brilliance. But for six days and six nights, television was already in search of its wasteland.

In Chicago in 1958, Ed Murrow made a speech that was to thunder down the corridors of Madison Avenue. He said:

> Our history will be what we make it. And if there are any historians about fifty or a hundred years from now and there should be preserved the kinescopes for one week of all three networks, they will there find recorded in black and white or color evidence of decadence, escapism and insulation from the realities of the world in which we live. I invite your attention to the television schedules of all networks between the hours of 8 and 11 P.M., Eastern time.
>
> Here you will find only fleeting and spasmodic references to the fact that this nation is in mortal danger. There are, it is true, occasional informative programs presented in that intellectual ghetto of Sunday afternoons. But during the daily peak viewing periods, television in the main insulates us from the realities of the world in which we live. If this state of affairs continues, we may alter an advertising slogan to read: Look Now, Pay Later. For surely we shall pay for using this most powerful instrument of communication to insulate the citizenry from the hard and demanding realities which must be faced if we are to survive. I mean the word *survive* literally.

For a time, the network bosses seemed to be listening. NBC, eager to prove it was in the running, hired Gitlin to produce a series called *NBC White Paper*. It was carried at night. On November 29, 1960, it broadcast "The U-2 Affair." Our government had been caught lying and television said so. Bob Young's *Sit In* was an inspired film of blacks on the move. My own film, *Panama Danger Zone*, revealed the ancient world of imperialism in Latin America. CBS was on weekly with *CBS Reports* and David Lowe's *Harvest of Shame* exposed the crime of workers harvested like grain and discarded like used flour sacks. Even ABC had come to life with a series called *Close-Up*. We had found a place in the evening sun—for a time.

But when we hit the evening schedule, we were thrown into the rating battle. The advertising office pointed out that the tough *CBS Reports* was at the bottom of the chart. Who was watching? Only 10 million or so. How many books sell that many copies? How many movies are seen by that many? But these programs that opened a window on the world were seen as letting a cold draft into the golden hothouse of commercial broadcasting.

Network executives treated documentary makers like token Negroes—a necessary group that caught the rhythm of the times. A few sponsors made grandiose gestures, like Medicis in search of honors, but why should a network feel responsible for informing the public? The FCC had never canceled a license for the failure to do so. A great many Congressmen were in the station business, and they were not about to pass laws to wipe out profit.

Some brilliant young documentary men were to pass our way and die in this all-American cause. David Lowe died after expeditions into KKK country and the lost world of South Africa. Ted Yates, who had an eye for the pomp and circumstances of international affairs, caught a stray bullet in Jerusalem.

And then we lost the giants. Ed Murrow who had drifted over to USIS, his brow now permanently angled in disgust at the medium he had honored, died of cancer. Gitlin, who learned the art of negotiating with network vice presidents, who were really in another business, also died. Friendly, friendless after Murrow was gone, fought the battle of the soap operas, and was deposited up at Columbia and out at the Ford Foundation. His anger was missed.

Creeping self-censorship began. When Vietnam came along, not one documentary ever said that it was an obscene waste of human life and let's get out!

A few new styles passed by, still using the awful word "documentary." From Hollywood came "specials" about the life and times of movie stars—half truths added up in the hope that they would make one whole. A group thought it had discovered something new in *Cinéma Verité*, a limited film tool that frequently looked as if cameramen had one leg shorter than the other, as with hand-held equipment they followed celebrities down the back corridors of unimportant lives.

There were occasional bursts of brilliance, such as Arthur Barron's *Sixteen at Webster Grove*, and Frank De Felitta's song to the South, and *Hunger in America*. But reports on issues that were agonizing America became fewer and fewer.

Public Television seemed a new hope, but so far it has been mostly disappointing. To be sure, there has been the occasional standout like *Banks and the Poor*, and the new series *The Great American Dream Machine* has moments of the fusion of fact and fancy that has appeal, but where is the depth, God help us. There is, to be sure, *Sesame*

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I Ins

I keep hitting little bingles.
Do I like losing? No——
but I never could stay in the boxes.
You field everything I hit you
and bean me then with fireballs.
I fly out in romantic exaggeration;
you shag me back to earth.
I cried when the Cubs traded Pafko; you joke that
you cried when the Dodgers got him.

You are a summer of pennants:
flawless as infields, yet a longer shot
than the money odds in the bleachers.
Grander than astrodomes or world's fair stadiums,
more of a tangle than Wrigley's sunlit vines.
And even out of season, in different games,
you are quicker than instant replay,
hard as a rabbit punch,
lovelier than the pole vault.

I always liked best playing with the big boys.
I think I will love you till the man in blue
thumbs me underground.

II Outs

Whose clothes are in my locker?

This wind is cold. A new season.
I do not know these rules.

My knees are Broadway Joe's.

Barbara Harr

FOR DAN BERRIGAN

Puck, poet, priest,
Dancing on a tongue of fire
In joyous despite of the jingo jail,
Bottomed to a Jude but topped
To pillars like the saint
Whose name you take, take to style,
You're corrupting my loss of faith.

The game has downed the cat,
And like a mouse in black,
Knowing the value of cloth,
You spin a prayer around the spider,
Unwinding the web like thread through a maze
Rolling yourself in a beeswax ball
To throw at the giant to dumb his speech—
Not saving the world, perhaps,
But springing delight
With a saving song of self
To become a man made metaphor.

Robert McGovern

WINTER LIGHT

Old snow litters the streets,
& some fire snorts in the dump.
It has been a quiet time. Finding
things to use for the winter. Finding

things that can be disposed of easily,
without harm to the present body
which seems also to be made of disposable fabric
the texture of waffles
caught in teeth & tasteless.

It is too early to say some of the arteries
have gone
where dead arteries go, tho
the lungs under x-ray
etch out streets of darkness
with names you won't recall.

Terry Stokes

ABOUT ANGELS

Angels are grazing in the spring grass;
Their light pours upward, and the sun
Drains it away.

*****

Behind me, flowers spring erect,
Offering me the gift of weightlessness,
Gift of angels and spiders.

Paul Zweig

THE SURROGATE

She stole ma hat
ma hat . was in the lounge with ma jacket
The jacket she dint take it, but
ma hat, she tukkit, clean
outa the place . she liked
ma hat . & went with it to the room & danced
DANCED with it, wearin the hat she
D A N C E D!

she danced,
and dint expect I'd cum back ferit . ah did .

Pretended I hadn't figured it out
talkin with her friend . I'd figured
she laiked ma hat .

The next mornin, nobuddy up, both of 'em sleepin late .
"Come in"
/
I did & there it wass,

ma hat
on the bed, she'd bigod
slept with ma hat!

Paul Blackburn

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Street—the 4-year-olds are being taken care of. It's their parents I worry about. The FCC has foolishly removed half an hour of network time without exempting documentary programs. Thus the networks, faced with recession economy and the removal of cigarette ads, have the perfect excuse to further reduce nonfiction programming, further lowering public confidence in the public medium. A kind of death wish for television as we have known it in America!

In the commercial season, not one weekly show is dedicated to documenting contemporary life. Networks have discovered through the ratings that the young have abandoned television. Why not—it offers them nothing. There's danger in the streets, but on the tube there's tedium. The bosses have tried for "relevance," by which they mean that *Young Lawyers* or *Young Doctors* may now touch on such subjects as sex and maybe race. So, you get heroes, all looking as if they had been farmed in from the parking lot attendants' school of charm, who deal with fantasized heroines. The result has been hilarious. The young have not stayed to watch; the old have been offended, and *Variety* proclaimed "Relevance is Dead."

Eric Barnouw, in his haunting account of broadcast history, *The Image Empire*, sees the problem becoming international. He writes: "The broadcast industry is becoming aware that the sales and mythology it has promoted so well are not solving the huge problems that surround it. In many lands, the American broadcasting system has established itself with its promise of national development, but the reality has too often been a deepening dependence on the United States—while headache tablets, hair tonics, deodorants, lotions, stomach settlers, soft drinks, cigarettes, lipsticks, hair dyes, and television itself have been sold as symbols of the good life. The products have tended to create little Americas throughout the world, walling themselves off from surrounding problems, diverting energies and funds from dire necessities to props of a strange culture."

I have my own suggestion, and it is not so different from what Murrow pleaded a dozen years ago. I don't believe that the answer is necessarily government in broadcasting, although it has come up with some winners in England. (It may be worth noting that the series called *Civilization* may not have sold soap, but will nevertheless make millions for the BBC through sales of books, 16 mm. rights, etc. And Xerox, *Civilization*'s U.S. sponsor and now almost the only enlightened industrial sponsor in America, has its name on Educational TV six times a week. The commercial networks couldn't find room for civilization.) What I suggest is simple: every network must carry at least an hour of documentary films on prime time each week or have its license cancelled. I hear cries: how about the ratings? My answer: forget the ratings. When those licenses were issued ratings had not been invented. O.K., how about sponsors? Forget the sponsors. If they wish to be associated with the hour, fine. If not, the networks must pay the bill as part of their right to exist. It's not complicated.

And no excuses. Networks will say that they have their newscasts. I say it's not enough to offer only the headlines of these tragic times. They will say that they have magazine shows, such as *60 Minutes* and *Second Tuesday*, every other week or once a month. Great. But these features, normally run in the back of news magazines, are also not enough. I say that if the American people know the documentary is there they will accept it, watch it and, if the films are done right, be moved and excited.

Consider again that Murrow speech. He concluded:

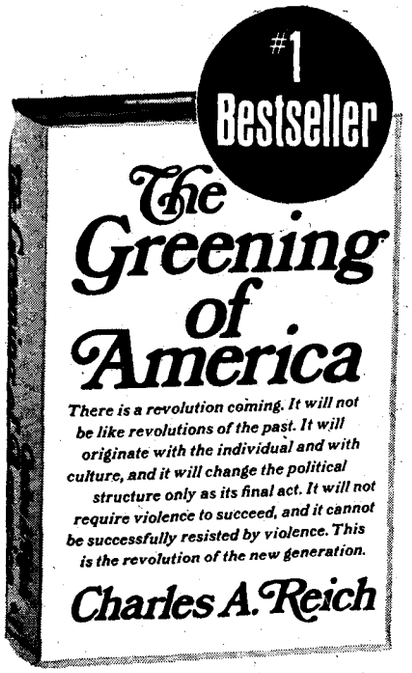
> This instrument can teach, it can illuminate; yes, and it can inspire. But it can do so only to the extent that humans are determined to use it to those ends. Otherwise it is merely wires and lights in a box. There is a great and perhaps decisive battle to be fought against ignorance, intolerance and indifference. This weapon of television could be useful.
>
> Stonewall Jackson, who knew something about the use of weapons, is reported to have said, "When war comes you must draw the sword and throw away the scabbard." The trouble with television is that it is rusting in the scabbard during the battle for survival.

There may in fact be a danger in overstating the potential power of the tube to deal with the problems of our times. From personal experience I know that it has an effect as limited in many ways as its own time span. When Murrow broadcast *Harvest of Shame* on Thanksgiving Day a decade ago, many were genuinely shocked. Did that end the obvious problem? Not long ago, I went down to cover some of the same territory, making a film called *Thorn of Plenty* about the braceros in California. Little in fact had changed.

That is why I insist that what we do must be constant, checked and rechecked. Ordinary people, driven into the shadows of our society, may find a moment to express their complaints in a documentary, but it does little good if they are then discarded like old news items.

There is ample evidence that constancy can make the difference. Take the case again of the wonder of videoland, *Sesame Street*. A whole generation of children is being educated with the help of one television series. If you doubt the force of this remarkable series, enter into a conversation with any American 4-year-old today. He will sing you an alphabet and count to you as if it were the greatest game ever invented. But while the children have gained television's finest hour, the adults have lost all their hours. Since there was no national uprising when weekly documentaries were dismissed, there has been no motive to reinstate them. Vice President Agnew, merely by pointing a finger, was able to do more damage to TV than a generation of educators could do it good. By raising the question of criticism, he sent the network chiefs into hiding. They ask, though not publicly, why they should put their necks out for programs that no one supports, that sponsors expect for a bargain, and that might lead to further threats from Mr. Agnew.

And those Sunday afternoons that we thought so confining are gone, I think, forever. I can recall that not long ago, when a film I made, *Hall of Kings*, had won an Emmy, there seemed to be reason to rebroadcast it. ABC tried twice to run it on a Sunday afternoon. Twice the first half was cut for a basketball game. Apparently the entire history of England, the lyrics of the language we speak, the pageantry of a nation's glow, were not as important as a basketball game.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If the most awe-inspiring weapon of communications ever invented won't help us look back, won't help inspect the present, won't help open avenues into the future, we may be attending the burial services of much more than the documentary. I realize that I am hollering, "Hear me," "listen," "look," "beware," at the top of my written voice, but remember, they took away my camera and my microphone and the power to telecast the facts of life. The question is: is anybody listening? □

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A FELLOW LAUGHED AT ME

A fellow laughed at me the other day.
He said, "How do you expect to develop a democracy in that flock of sheep? Sheep are interested only in their own petty desires, not in the welfare of other members of the flock.
"The shepard does a lot of work in protecting the sheep from the wolves. Do you think he does that just out of love?
"Sure, love is a wonderful thing. But the sheep don't contribute anything to others out of love. Why should they expect to be the beneficiaries of love?
"The next thing you'll be trying to build peace in the jungle. You'll expect all the wild animals to go around hungry, because you find it unpleasant for others to relieve THEIR hunger by attacking prey.
"Haven't the wise men of the past taught you one can build peace and democracy only among enlightened and disciplined human beings?
"And there's much more to being a human being than merely walking on two feet."

D. KORETZ P.O. Box 733 Detroit, Mich. 48231

ART

MAURICE GROSSER

Mr. Grosser, artist and writer, is the author of The Critic's Eye *(Bobbs-Merrill).*

The Moore College of Art in Philadelphia is holding until February 19 a comprehensive exhibition of the work of one of its most distinguished graduates, the painter Alice Neel. Sixty-seven paintings and nineteen drawings have been selected from the work of forty years. The majority are portraits, beginning with a very nude one of Joe Gould, Harvard graduate, Greenwich Village panhandler, and author of a voluminous, unfinished and unpublished *Oral History of the World*, and going on to portraits painted last year of such real celebrities as Linus Pauling, twice winner of the Nobel Prize, and Andy Warhol, artist and cinematographer.

The colors are bright and clear; the seated or standing figures are almost life size, and their placement on the canvas casual and informal. The pictures seem to have been executed in three or four sittings and left as finished when the likeness had been achieved. The persons represented have enormous presence: Andy Warhol nude to the waist, his patchwork of operation scars exposed, and with the opalescent flesh and listless air of one who has been very ill. The painter, Raphael Soyer, indrawn and a little sad. Linus Pauling, looking out from under his brows as though worrying about the state of the world. Walter Gutman, writer and promoter, carefully dressed, weighty and slightly ominous as only a promoter can be. The poet Frank O'Hara in profile, intent and a little mad, peering over the hook of his nose. And the poet, Jerry Malanga, sprawled in a chair, at ease and looking as though ready for anything.

There are many double portraits, always a tour de force: two artists, Red Grooms and Mimi Gross, seated side by side and he holding her hand; the critics, David Bourdon and Gregory Battcock, one dressed only in his underwear and looking depressed; the other in a Brooks Brothers suit and cheerful, posed as if to suggest a sort of literary *Sacred and Profane Love*; a portrait of Rita Red and Jackie Curtis huddling together, a little awed by the painter, one a chubby youngster with a mop of golden curls; the other got up in women's clothes and made up to look like Theda Bara. A triple portrait of the writer, John Gruen, his wife (the painter Jane Wilson) and their child, sitting all in a row and enjoying being painted. Not everyone in the pictures manages to look quite as content as these, but all of them seem extraordinarily alive.

The scale of the figures and the vividness of their characterizations make one think of the German, Max Beckman. But Beckman, a caricaturist rather than portrait painter, exaggerated his sitters' traits of character to construct figures of fun and images of vice. The pictures here are much more in line with the late René Bouché's brilliant and almost libelous documentation of the celebrities of Café Society in the decades after the last World War. Bouché described his sitters' characters with an almost cruel frankness; at the same time, he was able to endow them with such worldly elegance that everything derogatory said about them could be overlooked.

Alice Neel has Bouché's great gift of speed; she works so rapidly that the picture is done before the model gets impatient. Her color is not as inventive as Bouché's, nor has she his sense of *Vogue* style to give her sitters a compensatory varnish of elegance. They come out all the more real—some of them unhappy, some friendly, and all a little marked by the unquiet world in which we live.

Of all the kinds of painting, portraiture is perhaps the most difficult to pull off. It is not enough for the painter to know how to paint. He must be a seer and a medicine man as well. The act of painting a portrait is both a magical process and a battle of wills. The sitter wishes to be shown in a favorable light. If the sitter wins, the results will concord with whatever stereotype of beauty or greatness he most admires. If the painter wins, the picture will come out sharply individualized, possibly unflattering, and probably unacceptable, unacceptable because, however interested the sitter may be in finding out what he looks like to the painter, what he is actually paying his money for is a favorable opinion.

The extraordinary thing about Alice Neel's pictures is that no concession whatever has been made to the sitters' vanity. The painter has put down truthfully what she has seen. Acute reporting such as this demands more than talent and strength of character alone. It could not have been accomplished without the additional circumstance, unfortunate but necessary, that none of these pictures was commissioned. Since the painter was not expecting to be paid, there was no reason to flatter her sitters or even to reassure them. Indeed, I suspect that it was only the sitters' curiosity and apprehension of what they would come out looking like that kept them sitting to the end. □

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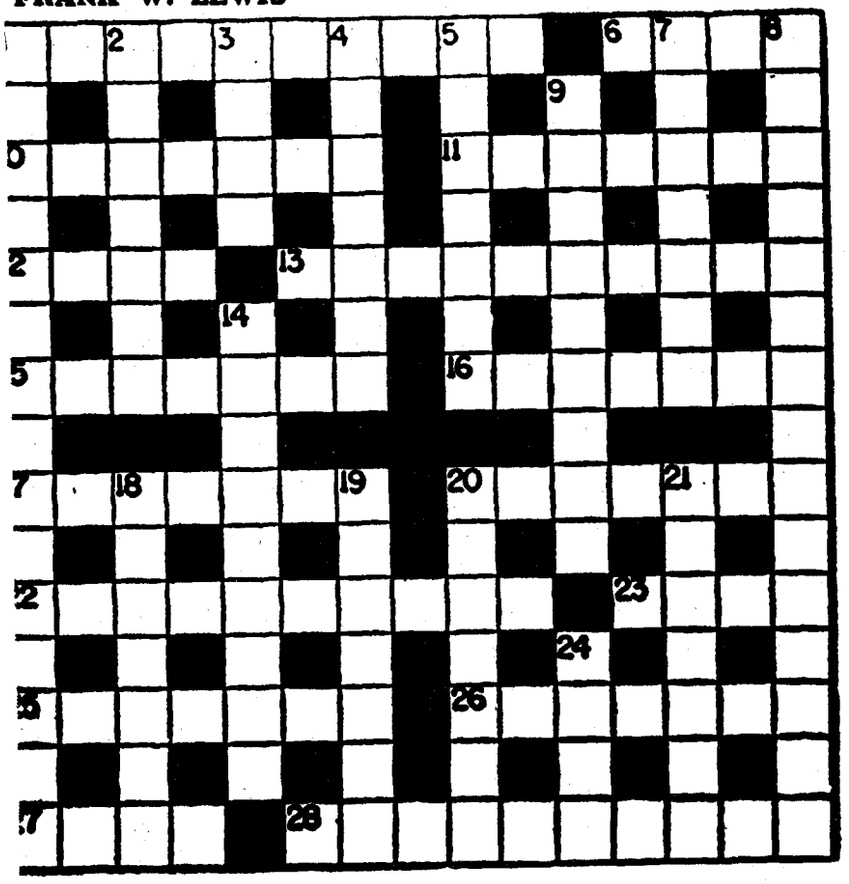
Crossword Puzzle No. 1381

FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1 One way man gets out is to become chairman! (3,3-4)
10 Flower arrangement certain to be part of the easy life. (7)
11 Mailer's version is certainly not full of imagination! (7)
12 and 6 across Possibly the president of the group of course, but should be right on the ball! (8)
13 Madison Avenue crossroads, tacking on an auxiliary? (10)
15 The clue to 11 at first? But all clues have them! (7)
16 The Turkish chief, fending for himself, has his own title. (7)
17 What the disdainful don't give to both everything and nothing in the treaty port? (7)
20 Shingles might, where the rug is sometimes thrown. (7)
22 An assistant for the auditor? (3,7)
23 How some packages arrive with a noted finish? (4)
25 One of Millet's characters. (7)
26 Containing an element, 253's a sort of it. (7)
27 A Herculean job! (4)
28 Is there a constant hum from such a small speaker? (10)

DOWN

1 Well, I caught more somehow, 16 with oxygen! (9,6)
2 Always found in layers? (The poet gets badly cut by it.) (7)
3 Might be used for digging up a potato. (4)
4 and 19 down A day to kill at the Capitol? (3,4,2,5)
5 Run true to form, as support. (7)
7 The bulldog is one. (7)
8 The odd behavior of an extra mod piece. (8,7)
9 Ballet should not be simple or expensive. (5,4)
14 Stating what the bridge player might be doing? (9)
18 Replays of what the truce team engages in? (7)
19 See 4 down
20 What the printer might do is suggestive of the stage manager's job. (About 135 degrees it should be obvious!) (7)
21 It's a small part of pride! (4,3)
24 Ducked the clue, by the sound of it, though took flight according to the answer, we hear. (4)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 1380

ACROSS: 8 Feeling the pinch; 9 Attest; 10 Air raids; 11 Grub; 13 Aide-de-camp; 15 Off-days; 16 Abroach; 19 Bridgework; 21 Sort; 22 Overstep; 24 Ringer; 26 Stamp collection. DOWN: 1 Center of gravity; 2 and 14 down Blue Cross; 3 Unsteady; 4 Strands; 5 Penrod; 6 Diva; 7 Academic freedom; 12 Boded; 17 Bakeries; 18 Compile; 20 Entice; 23 Ramp; 25 Nuts.

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